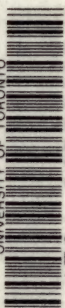


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THE  
REFORMATION IN EUROPE

IN THE TIME OF CALVIN.

VOL. III.



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# HISTORY

OF

# THE REFORMATION IN EUROPE

IN THE TIME OF CALVIN.

BY J. H. MERLE D'AUBIGNÉ, D.D.

AUTHOR OF THE

'HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY' ETC.

'Les choses de petite durée ont coutume de devenir fanées, quand elles ont passé leur temps.'

'Au règne de Christ, il n'y a que le nouvel homme qui soit florissant, qui ait de la vigueur, et dont il faille faire cas.'

CALVIN.

VOL. III.

FRANCE, SWITZERLAND, GENEVA.

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## PREFACE.

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THE time at which this volume appears would seem to require a few words of introduction.

A day which closes a great epoch in the history of modern times, will soon be called to the remembrance of Protestant Christians. The registers of the Consistory of Geneva for the year 1564, bear under the name of Calvin these simple words :

*Allé à Dieu le Sabmedy 27 de May, entre huit et neuf heures du soir.\**

The author of this volume, having been invited by the Evangelical Alliance to deliver an address on *The Reformation and the Reformer of Geneva*, during the Œcumenical Conference held at Geneva in September, 1861, observed, in the course of his preparatory work, this important date, and proposed to the assembly that on the tercentenary of the Reformer's death, Geneva and the Reformed Churches in general, should return thanks publicly to God that he had raised up John Calvin in the sixteenth century, to labour at the reformation of the Church, by re-establishing Holy

\* Went to God between the hours of eight and nine o'clock in the evening of Saturday 27th May.

Scripture as the supreme authority, and grace as the only means of salvation. The members of the Conference, about two thousand in number, adopted the resolution by acclamation.\*

As Christian Protestants were preparing to celebrate the anniversary, the author desired to contribute something according to his ability towards reviving the memory of the great doctor. Almost at the very time when the idea of this Protestant festival occurred to his mind, he proposed to describe in a special work, *The Reformation of Europe in the time of Calvin*. Having published the first two volumes more than a year ago, he looked forward to issuing another before the 27th May, and he now presents it to the public. May it occupy its humble place among the memorials destined to commemorate the Lord's work.

The persecuting jesuitry of the seventeenth century, and the superficial incredulity of the eighteenth, have calumniated the great Reformer of the West. Times have changed, and the nineteenth century is beginning to do him justice. His works, even those still in manuscript, are sought after and published; his life and character, his theology and influence, are the object of numerous studies which in general bear the stamp of fairness; and even distinguished painters have found the subject of their finest pictures in his life.

We entertain no blind admiration for him. We know that he has sometimes used bitter language. We acknowledge that, sharing in the faults of his century,

\* Conférences de Genève en 1861, i. pp. 390, 391.

or rather of ten centuries, he believed that whatever infringed on the respect due to God ought to be punished by the civil power, quite as much as anything that might be injurious to the honour or the life of man. We deplore this error. But how can any one study with discernment the Reformer's letters and other writings, and not recognise in him one of the noblest intelligences, one of the most elevated minds, one of the most affectionate hearts, and in short, one of those true Christian souls who unreservedly devote themselves to duty? An eminent scholar, whom Scotland still laments—Dr. Cunningham, the successor of Chalmers—said, in a work published a short time before his death, ‘Calvin is the man who, next to St. Paul, has done most good to mankind.’

No doubt he will always have his enemies. A journal of high character and great circulation in Germany, speaking of a libel (*Schmæhschrift* is the word used), published some time ago against Calvin, asks ‘From what camp does it proceed—from jesuitical Romanism or atheistical libertinism?’ It is, indeed, from these quarters that the enemies of the Reformer principally come; but we acknowledge that a man may be opposed to Calvin, and yet not belong to either of these schools.

Let us not disquiet ourselves, however, about such attacks; Calvin's Master has said, *If they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?*\*

The author of the present volume thinks that the best way of doing justice to his memory, is to make

\* Luke, xviii. 31.



him known. The reader will meet in this work with many sayings and doings of this great man, which are not to be found in other histories. If a writer had the good fortune to lay before the German public some unknown trait of Luther's life, all Germany would be taken up with it. Shall we be more indifferent to the life of our great Reformer? Certainly there are more striking actions in the life of Luther, who so easily gains possession of our hearts; but we may ask whether there are not features in the life of Calvin, which are less frequent in that of the Wittenberg doctor; the manner, for instance, in which the young doctor of Noyon, wherever he happens to be (at Angoulême, Poitiers, &c.), is at once surrounded by distinguished men, whom he wins over to the truth?

The author desires, however, to remind some of his readers, that this book is not the history of Calvin. The title expresses that clearly enough: *History of the Reformation* IN EUROPE *in the time of Calvin*. It is the second series of a work of which the *History of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*, was the first. The reformation of the Western nations, of which Calvin was the soul, having a special character, we thought it our duty to devote a special work to it; but we shall not confine ourselves to relating the facts of the Reformation in which Calvin took a direct part. One portion of the fourth volume will describe the Reformation in England, from the fall of Wolsey. We purpose also to continue retracing the leading features of the Reformation in Germany, as we have

already done in the first two volumes of this work, in which the alliance of Smalkalde, the peace of Nuremberg, the emancipation of Wurtemberg, and other analogous events have found their place.\* It is the Reformation as a whole which the author desires to delineate.

After speaking of France and Calvin, the author relates, in the present volume, facts which concern Latin Switzerland (Suisse Romande), the Waldensian villages of Piedmont, and finally Geneva.

He does not think it proper to pass by unnoticed certain reproaches which the first two volumes have brought upon him. 'It is a strange idea,' some have said, 'to devote so much space to Geneva. Is it not doing too much honour to a little city of a few thousand souls? History requires great people and mighty personages. We meet with these at least around Luther; but in Geneva, we find none but humble syndics and petty citizens.'

True, it is so. In this part of our history we have to deal with a little city and a little people; and even in this democratic age, there are persons who will put up with nothing but electors and kings. May we be permitted to reply that what is small, as regards outward appearances, is sometimes important as regards moral influence. This is a truth often reverted to in Holy Scripture: *The ships, though they be so great, yet are they turned about with a very small helm.*†

This portion of our narrative contains two parts:

\* See Book ii. ch. xxi. xxii. xxvi. xxxi. xxxiii.

† Epistle of St. James, iii. 4.

one is devoted to a man—Calvin; the other to a city—Geneva. These two existences seem in the eyes of many persons to evolve separately, as if they were never to meet. But there is a close relation between them: from the very beginning they are destined to unite. Each is energetic, though without parade, and their alliance will in some future day double their strength. When Calvin and Geneva are one, many men and nations will feel their powerful and salutary influence. It is a marriage that will produce a numerous and active posterity. Whatever the friends of worldly greatness may say, this union, when it took place, was an event of more importance to the human race, than that which led a panegyrist of Louis XIV. to exclaim, in reference to a celebrated event—

Les Bourbons, ces enfants des dieux,  
Unissent leurs tiges fécondes! \*

The idea expressed above will not be generally accepted. The smallness of the scene which it unfolds will prevent the second work from interesting so much as the first. And yet there have been critics who have felt the importance of the history of Geneva. May we be permitted to give a few examples?

The *London Review* says: ‘For the narrowness of the field—a small city—the variety of characters presented may well astonish us. The dew-drop is big enough to hold an image of the heavens and earth; and a city closely studied mirrors an empire. The

\* ‘Those children of the gods, the Bourbons, unite their fruitful races.’



story is crowded with incidents and surprises, with heroic deeds and endurance, and also with foul deeds and shames.' Some reviewers have gone so far as to place the facts of the second work above those of the first. The *New York Observer* says: 'The story of the times in which the Swiss Reformation was wrought is surrounded with a sublimity, romantic grandeur, and interest that attach to no part of the great German movement under Luther.'

We omit the remarks of other journals, particularly of the *Saturday Review*, which rejoices to see 'the Genevese champions of liberty brought to light.' We must, however, quote one more, the *Patriot*, which says: 'Geneva is one of the smallest and one of the most heroic cities of Europe. Had it been predicted, its history would have been incredible. Geneva defied not only the Duke of Savoy and the Pope, but the Emperor Charles V., and dared also his scarcely less powerful rival Francis I.; and in spite of them all it won, first, its political and then its religious liberties, and not for itself only but for Northern Europe. More than once it was the Thermopylæ of Protestantism and freedom, bravely held by an heroic little band scarcely more in comparison with those who sought to destroy them than the three hundred men of Leonidas in comparison with the Persians.'

But if the opinions of some were favourable to the little city, the criticisms of others were not so; and as the author will again speak of Geneva in this volume, and (God willing) in others, he desires to say a word of explanation with reference to these objections.

If the work is found uninteresting, the fault must be ascribed to the historian, not to the history. The talent of one of the great masters of history would have prevented all reproach ; but the workman damaged the work. Can the present generation have become so fastidious as to cease to feel interest in what is great and beautiful of itself, and to need all the refinements of style in order to revive its morbid tastes?

Geneva is a republic, and this, perhaps, may also have told against our narrative. Some persons have fancied that when the author spoke of liberty, he meant liberty in the republican form alone, and that may have displeased them. But that is a mistake ; the author has always had in view that constitutional liberty which includes all modern liberties, and not any particular form of it. He even believes that the monarchical form is the most favourable to the liberties of a great nation. It has been his lot to see side by side, a republic without liberty and a monarchy in which all were free.\*

The coldness, however, of some readers for the annals of a little people, proceeds in the main from another cause. There are in reality two histories : one which is external and makes much noise, but whose consequences are not lasting ; the other, which is internal, has but a mean appearance, like the seed when it germinates ; and which nevertheless bears most precious fruit. Now what pleases the general public is a narrative in which great armies manœuvre ; while, on the other hand, what touches the author

is the movement of the soul, of strong characters, enthusiastic outbursts, the low estate of humble and tranquil hearts, holy affections, life-giving principles, the faith which gains victories, and the Divine life which regenerates nations—in a word, the moral world. The material world, physical and appreciable forces, parks of artillery and glittering squadrons, possess but a secondary interest in his eyes. Numerous cannons (it is true) give more smoke; but to those external powers, which destroy life, he prefers the internal powers which elevate the soul, warm it for truth, for liberty, and for God, and cause it to be born again to life everlasting. If these internal forces are developed in the midst of a little people, they possess all the more attraction for him.

If humble heroes are not popular, shall I therefore leave their noble actions in obscurity? Shall I limit myself henceforward to bringing princes and kings on the stage, with statesmen, cardinals, armies, treaties, and empires? No: I cannot do so. I shall have to speak, indeed, of Francis I. and Charles V., of Anne Boleyn and Henry VIII., and other great personages; but I shall still remain faithful to little people and little things. It is indeed a petty city whose struggles I am relating; but it is the city that for two centuries made head against Rome, until she had resigned the task entrusted to her into the hands of more powerful nations—England, Germany, and America. Let the liberals despise her who at this very time most enjoy the fruits of her severe struggles. . . . Be it so. . . . As for me, I have not the courage

to follow them. I call to mind the refugees she has entertained . . . the asylum they found there, and which their children still enjoy . . . and I desire to pay my debt. Oh! if she would only understand that she cannot exist with honour in the future, unless, while loving liberty, she loves the Gospel more than everything else.

Let me say a few words more on the principles which have guided me in composing this history. What it is necessary for us to study above all things is, in my opinion, the beginnings. The formation of beings, the origin of the successive phases of humanity, possess in my eyes an importance and interest far surpassing the exhibition of what these things have afterwards become. The creative epoch of Christianity, in which we contemplate Christ and His apostles, is to me far more admirable than those which succeeded it. Similarly the Reformation, which is the creation of the evangelical world in modern times, has greater attractions for me than the Protestantism which comes after. I take a pleasure in watching life in its commencement. When the work is done, its *summa momenta* are over. In the first lines of the first volume of my first work, I said that I should follow this rule. I shall not be reproached for remaining faithful to it.

An objection has been raised that this history is too full of details. I might reply that it is not good to leave facts in vagueness; that they must be analysed and described. The surrounding circumstances can



alone give an accurate knowledge of events, and impress on them the stamp of reality. The author may here quote an authority which no one will dispute. He remembers, that being in Paris at M. Guizot's, just as the first volume of the *History of the Reformation* appeared—about thirty years ago—that illustrious writer said to him: ‘Give us DETAILS, the rest we know.’ We do not think that many of our readers will fancy they know more than he does.

Another conviction also exercises some influence on the character of my narrative. It seems to me that the study of the unknown has a peculiar charm. Geneva and its struggles for liberty and the Gospel, are a *terra incognita*, except to its citizens and a few men of letters. When historians describe ancient or modern times—for example, the Revolution of the Netherlands, of England, or of France,—they can only say a little better what others have already said before them. Perhaps there is some advantage in exploring a virgin soil—in adding new facts to that treasury which ought to be the wisdom of nations. The author is not, however, blind to the truth there may have been in some of the criticisms upon his work—and while following the principles he has laid down, he will endeavour to profit by them.

He had hoped to publish the third and fourth volumes together this year. Having been forced to pass the winter of 1862–63 at Nice, with injunctions to abstain from work, he publishes one only now; but the next, God willing, will not be long delayed.

On returning from Nice, the author passed through

Piedmont, partly to be present at a synod in the Waldensian valleys, which reminded him of the one described in this volume; and partly to make researches among the General Archives of the kingdom at Turin. The valuable collections there contained were liberally thrown open to him, and he was able to select and transcribe some precious documents hitherto unknown, of which, as will be seen, he made immediate use. While thanking the various persons who have been useful to him in his researches, the author desires also to express his acknowledgments to the translator of this work, Dr. H. White, who has spared no pains in conveying to the English reader a faithful and animated copy of the original. The translation has been carefully revised by the author with great care, line by line and word by word, and some changes, not in the French edition, have been introduced.

Will this work obtain a success similar to that which attended the former one? That treated of the Reformation in Germany, with Luther as its hero; this treats especially of the Reform in Western Europe, with Calvin as its head. The scene of the latter being nearer home, ought to have more interest for British readers; or shall a new-born passion for Germany and the Germans make them look with indifference on all that does not directly concern the country of Luther? . . . France, Holland, England, Scotland, Switzerland should possess some attraction for them. The history, hitherto almost unknown, of the Reformation of Geneva is not only attractive in itself, it is also of importance with regard to England. Geneva is the



representative of a Christian system, of a great doctrine,—that of the supreme authority of Holy Scripture, and of the pure Gospel. The final triumph of this doctrine is of the greatest consequence for the English churches. A well-known British theologian of our day has said: ‘Two systems of doctrine are now, and probably for the last time, in conflict—the Catholic and the *Genevan*.’\*

May this work be of some little use in determining the issue!

LA GRAVELINE, EAUX VIVES:  
*Geneva, May 1864.*

\* Dr. Pusey, *Letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury*.



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HISTORY  
OF THE  
REFORMATION IN EUROPE  
IN THE TIME OF CALVIN.

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BOOK IV.

TIMES OF HOSTILITY TO THE REFORM IN FRANCE.

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CHAPTER I.

CALVIN, THE FUGITIVE, IN HIS RETREAT AT ANGOULÊME.

(NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER, 1533.)

RELIGION needs liberty, and the convictions inspired by her ought to be exempt from the control of the Louvre and of the Vatican. Man's conscience belongs to God alone, and every human power that encroaches on this kingdom and presumes to command within it is guilty of rebellion against its lawful sovereign. Religious persecution deserves to be reprobated, not only in the name of philosophy, but above all in the name of God's right. His sovereign Majesty is offended when the sword enters into the sanctuary. A persecuting government is not only illiberal, it is impious. Let no man thrust himself between God and the soul! The spot on which they

meet is holy ground. Away, intruder! Leave the soul with Him to whom it belongs.

These thoughts naturally occur to us as we approach an epoch when a persecuting fanaticism broke out in France, when scaffolds were raised in the streets of Paris, and when acts of terrible cruelty were enthusiastically applauded by a royal cortége.

These rights of conscience, which we record, are not new. They date neither from our century, nor from the sixteenth. The Saviour established them when he said: '*Render unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and UNTO GOD THE THINGS THAT ARE GOD'S.*' Since that hour they have been maintained by many courageous voices. During three centuries the martyrs said to the pagan emperors: 'Is it not an irreligious act to forbid my worshipping the God whom I like, and to force me to worship the god whom I dislike?''\* In the fourth century Athanasius and Hilary told the Arian princes: 'Satan uses violence, he dashes in the doors with an axe . . . but persuasion is the only weapon truth employs.'† In later years, when the barbarians desired to bend the Church under the weight of brute force, the hitherto servile clergy declared as loudly as they could that religious doctrine did not fall under the dominion of the temporal sword.

When, therefore, in the bloody days of the Reformation, the power of Rome, uniting in some countries with the power of the princes, wished to constrain men's souls and force them to submit to its laws, the

\* '*Adimere libertatem religionis, interdicere optionem divinitatis,*' &c. Tertullianus, *Apol.* cap. xxiv.

† Athanasius, *Hist. Arian.* § 3.

evangelical christians, by claiming liberty in their turn, only asserted the great principle of Jesus Christ formerly adopted by the Church herself. But, strange to say! this principle which she had found so admirable, when she had to employ it in self-defence, became impious when it was appealed to in order to escape from her persecutions. Such inconsistencies frequently occur in the history of fallen humanity. We must call them to remembrance though it be with sorrow. There have always existed many generous persons in the bosom of catholicity who have protested with horror against the frightful punishments by which it was attempted to make our forefathers renounce their faith; and there are still more now, for the laws of religious liberty are gradually becoming established among nations. But we must never forget that two centuries of cruel persecution was the welcome the world gave to the Reformation. When the day of St. Bartholomew saw the streets of the capital of the Valois run with blood,—when ruffians glutted their savage passions on the corpse of that best and greatest of Frenchmen, Coligny—immense was the enthusiasm at Rome, and a fierce shout of exultation rang through the pontifical city.\* Wishing to perpetuate the glory of the massacre of the huguenots, the pope ordered a medal to be struck, representing that massacre and bearing the device: *Hugonotorum strages*. The officers of the Roman court still sell (as we know personally) this medal to all who desire

\* ‘*Quis autem optabilior ad te nuncius adferri poterat, aut nos ipsi quod felicius optare poteramus principium pontificatus tui, quam ut primis illis mensibus tetram illam caliginem, quasi exorto sole, discussam cerneremus?*’

—*Mureti Orat.* xxii.



to carry away some remembrance of their city. Those times are remote; milder manners prevail, but it is the duty of protestantism to remind the world of the use made by the court of Rome, on emerging from the middle ages, of that *preeminence* in catholic countries, which she contends belongs to her always, and which she is still ready to claim 'with the greatest vigour.' Resistance to this cruel preeminence cost the Reformation torrents of the purest blood; and it is this blood which gives us the right to protest against it.

Before we describe the scenes of horror that defiled the streets of Paris at this period, we must follow in his flight that young doctor, who, though illustrious in after years, was now the victim of persecution.

The feast of All Saints being the day when the university celebrated the opening of the academical year, Calvin (as we have seen), through the channel of his friend Cop the rector, had displayed before the Sorbonne and a numerous audience the great principles of the Gospel. University, monks, priests had all been excited, scandalised, and exasperated; parliament had interfered; and Cop and Calvin were obliged to flee.

That man whose hand was one day boldly to raise the standard of the Gospel in the world, whose teaching was to enlighten many nations, and whose eloquence was to stir all France; that man who was yearly to send forth from Geneva some thirty or forty missionaries, and whose letters strengthened all the Churches; that man, still young, pursued by the lieutenant-criminal and his sergeants, had been forced to steal out



of his chamber into the street and disguise himself in strange garments; and in the beginning of November, he found himself in the back streets on the left bank of the Seine looking on every side lest there should be any one on his track. He had never been more tranquil than at the moment when struck by this sudden blow. Francis I. resisted the insolence of the monks; the Sorbonne had been compelled to disavow their most fanatical acts; many Lutherans were able to preach the Gospel freely to those around them; a reforming movement seemed spreading far and wide through France. . . when suddenly the lightning darted forth and struck the young reformer. 'I thought I should be able to devote myself to God's service without hindrance,' said he in his flight; 'I promised myself a tranquil career; . . . but at that very moment, what I expected least, namely persecution and exile, were at the door.' \*

Calvin did not regret, however, the testimony he had borne to the truth, and resigned himself to exile. Far from resembling the unbroken horse (to use his own expression) who refuses to carry his rider, he voluntarily bowed his shoulders to the cross.† *Never tire in the middle of your journey*, was his maxim always.‡ Yet as he travelled along those rough by-roads of the Mantois, he often asked himself what this severe dispensation was to teach him. Was he to retire from Paris and renounce the idea of making that city the centre of his christian activity? That

\* 'Cum promitterem mihi omnia tranquilla, aderat foribus quod minime sperabam.'—Letter to Francis Daniel.

† Calvin, *Harmonie Evangélique*.

‡ Calvin, *Lettres Françaises*, published by Jules Bonnet, i. p. 349.

would, indeed, be a hard trial for him. His people seemed to be waking, and he must leave them! . . . Still he kept on his way. On arriving near Mantes, he went to the residence of the Sire de Haseville, to whom he was known, and there remained in hiding several days. He then resumed his journey, either because he thought himself too near his enemies, or because his host was afraid.

Calvin took the road to the south; he crossed the charming plains and valleys of Touraine, entered the pasturages and forests of Poitou, and thence turned his steps towards Saintonge and the Angoumois.\* This latter province was the end of his journey. On a hill at whose foot the Charente 'softly flowed,' stood the cathedral, the old castle and city of Angoulême, the birth-place of Margaret of Navarre. Calvin entered the gates of this antique town, and made his way to one of the principal streets, which afterwards received in his honour the name it still bears—*Rue de Genève*. In that street was a large mansion whose principal apartment was a long gallery in which more than four thousand volumes, printed or manuscript, were collected: it was one of the most valuable private libraries then existing in France.† The fugitive halted before this house. Learned works were doubtless well calculated to attract him; but he was animated by another motive also. This mansion belonged to the family of Du Tillet, whose members were reckoned among the most learned in the kingdom. The father

\* 'In agrum Santonicum demigrans.'—Beza, *Vita Calvini*.

† 'Conclavi quodam in Tiliæ ædibus, plus quatuor librorum, tam impressorum quam manuscriptorum, millibus instructo.'—Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Heres.* ii. p. 248.

and two of his sons were detained in Paris by their duties in the Chamber of Accounts, at the Louvre and in parliament; but another son, Louis, canon of the cathedral, was at Angoulême, and lived alone in that large house, when he was not at his parish of Claix. Louis was Calvin's friend,\* and it was the remembrance of this gentle, mild, and rather weak young man, whose disposition was very engaging, that had induced the fugitive to bend his steps towards the Angoumois.

Calvin stopped in front of his friend's house and knocked at the door, it opened, and he went in: we cannot say whether he found the canon there or not, but at all events the latter was filled with joy when he heard of the arrival of the young doctor, whose 'great gifts and grace' he admired so much, and whose intimacy had been so sweet to him. Calvin told him how he had been obliged to flee from the attacks of the parliament, and of the danger to which those who gave him refuge were exposed. But Du Tillet thought himself the happiest of men, if he could but shelter his friend from the search of his enemies. Once more he was about to enjoy those spiritual and edifying conversations which he had so often regretted and could never forget.† Even the persecution of which Calvin was a victim made him all the dearer to his friend; and Louis introduced him into the vast gallery, installed him in the midst of the most eminent minds of all ages, whose celebrated works loaded the numerous shelves, and established him, as in a safe retreat, in that beautiful library

\* See Vol. II. book ii. ch. xx.

† *Corresp. de Calvin et de Du Tillet*, published by M. Crottet, p. 30.

which seemed prepared for the lofty intelligence and profound studies of the theologian.

Calvin, who needed retirement and repose, felt happy. 'I am never less alone than when alone,' he used to say.\* At one time, he gave thanks to God; at another, taking the precious volumes from the shelves around him, he opened and read them, assuaging the thirst for knowledge which consumed him. A learned retreat, like that now given him, was the dream of his whole life. Pious reflections crowded into his heart, and if during his flight he had felt a momentary darkness, the light now shone into his soul. 'The causes of what happens to us are often so hidden,' he said in after times, 'that human affairs seem to turn about at random, as on a wheel, and the flesh tempts us to murmur against God, because he sports with men, tossing them here and there like balls, . . . but the issue shows us that God is on the watch for the salvation of believers.'†

A new epoch, a new phase, was beginning for Calvin: he was leaving school, he was about to enter upon life, and a pause was necessary. The future reformer, before rushing into the storms of an agitated career, was to be tempered anew in the fire of the divine Word and of prayer. Great struggles awaited him: the Church was waking up from the slumber of death, throwing back the winding-sheet of popery, and rising from the sepulchre. One universal cry was heard among all the nations of the West. At Worms, a monk had demanded the Holy Scriptures of God in presence

\* 'Nunquam minus solum esse quam quum solus esset.'—Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Heres.* ii. p. 247.

† Calvin, *Institutes*, bk. i. ch. xvii.



of the imperial diet; a priest had demanded them at Zurich; students had demanded them at Cambridge; at Spire, an assembly of princes had declared that they would hear nothing but the preaching of that heavenly Word; and its life-bearing doctrines had been solemnly confessed at Augsburg in the presence of Charles V. Germany, Switzerland, England, the Low Countries, Italy—all Europe, in a word, was stirred at the sight of that new faith which had come forth from the tomb of ages. . . . France herself was moved. How could a young man so modest, so timid, who feared so much all contact with the passions of men — how could Calvin battle for the faith, if he did not receive in the retirement of the wilderness the baptism of the Spirit and of fire?

And this baptism he received. Alone and forced to hide himself, he experienced an inward peace and joy he had never known before. ‘By the exercise of the cross,’ he said, ‘the Son of God receives us *into his order*, and makes us partakers of his glory.’ Accordingly he gave a very extraordinary name to the obscure town of Angoulême: he called it *Doxopolis*, the city of glory, and thus he dated his letters. How pleasant and glorious this retirement proved to him! He had found his Wartburg, his *Patmos*, and unable any longer to hide from his friends the happiness he enjoyed, he wrote to Francis Daniel of Orleans: ‘Why cannot I have a moment’s talk with you?’ he said, ‘not indeed to trouble you with my disputes and struggles; why should I do so? I think that what interests you more just now is to know that I am well, and that, if you take into account my known *indolence*, I am making progress in my

studies.’\* Then after speaking of Du Tillet’s kindness, of his own responsibility, and of the use he ought to make of his leisure . . . the joy which filled his heart ran over, and he exclaimed with thankfulness: ‘Oh! how happy I should think myself, if the peace which I now enjoy should continue during the time of my retirement and exile.† The Lord, whose providence foresees everything, will provide. Experience has taught me that we cannot see much beforehand what will happen to us. At the very moment when I promised myself repose, the storm burst suddenly upon me. And then, when I thought some horrible den would be my lot, a quiet *nest* was unexpectedly prepared for me.‡ . . . It is the hand of God that hath done this. Only let us trust in him, and he will care for us!’ Thus the hunted Calvin found himself at Angoulême, under God’s hand, like a young storm-driven bird that has taken refuge in the nest under the wing of its mother.

The young canon took the liveliest interest in the fate of his guest, and hoped to see the hospitality he showed him bear precious fruits for learning and the Gospel. Calvin, too humble to believe that Du Tillet’s cares had any reference to himself, ascribed them solely to his friend’s zeal for knowledge and the cause of Christ; it seemed to him that he could never repay such kindness but by constant labour, and that was all he ever had to give. ‘My protector’s kindness,’ he said, ‘is sufficient to stimulate the indolence

\* ‘Et pro ea quam nosti desidia, nonnihil studendo proficere.’—Berne MSS. vol. 450, Calvin to Fr. Daniel. *Doxopolis*.

† ‘Si id temporis quod vel exilio, vel secessui destinatum est, tanto in otio transigere datur, præclare mecum agi existimabo.’—Ibid.

‡ ‘Nidus, mihi, in tranquillo componebatur præter opinionem.’—Ibid.



of the laziest of men.\* Cheer up, then! let me make an effort, let me struggle earnestly. No more carelessness!† Then he shut himself up in Du Tillet's library, gathered round him the books he wanted, and said: 'I must give all my attention to study; this thought is constantly pulling me by the ear.' If he took a moment's leisure, he felt 'his ear pulled,' that is to say, his conscience was troubled; he hurried to his books, and set to work with so much zeal, 'that he passed whole nights without sleeping and days without eating.'‡ This was his *indolence*!

A great idea was at that time growing in his heart. Parliament accused and even burnt his brethren for pretended heresies. 'Must I be silent,' he said, 'and thus give unbelievers an opportunity of condemning a doctrine they do not know? Why should not the Reformed have a confession to lay before their adversaries?'§ As he examined Du Tillet's library, he came upon certain books which seemed to him to bear particularly on the existing state of suffering among evangelical christians. He saw that apologies had formerly been presented to the Emperor Adrian by Quadratus and Aristides, to Antoninus by Justin Martyr, and to Marcus Aurelius by Athenagoras. Ought not the friends of the Reformation to present a similar defence to Francis I.? If Calvin's mouth is shut, he will take up the pen. God was then setting

\* 'Sane inertissimi hominis ignaviam acuere posset patroni mei humanitas.'—Berne MSS. vol. 450, Calvin to F. Daniel. *Doxopolis*.

† 'Mihi conandum est, serioque contendendum.'—Ibid.

‡ 'Tam somni quam cibi omnino oblitus.'—Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Heres.* ii. p. 247.

§ 'Debere nobis in promptu esse fidei confessionem ut eam proferamus quoties opus est.'—Calvin, *Opp.* v. pars 4ta, p. 34.

him apart for one of the great works of the age. He did not indeed compose his *Christian Institutes* at this time, even under the elementary form of the first edition, but he meditated it; he searched the Scriptures; he drew out the sketch, and perhaps wrote some passages of that work, the finest produced by the Reformation. And hence one of the enemies of the Reform, casting a severe look on the learned library of the Du Tillet, was led to exclaim: 'This is the forge where the new *Vulcan* prepared the bolts that he was afterwards to scatter on every side. . . That is the factory where he began to make the nets that he afterwards fixed up to catch the simple, and from which a man must be very clever to get out. It was there that he wove the web of his *Institutes*, which we may call the *Koran* or the *Talmud* of heresy.'\*

While Calvin was writing his first notes, he heard some strange rumours. Men spoke to him of certain materialists in whose opinion the soul died with the body. At first he hesitated as to what he should do. 'How,' he asked, 'can I join battle with adversaries of whose camp and arms and tactics I know nothing, and of whom I have only heard some confused murmur?† Another consideration checked him. Allied to them were Christians who, while rejecting these errors, said that *time* did not exist for the soul separated from the body, and that the moment of death was followed instantly by the moment of resurrection. 'I should

\* 'In hac officina Vulcani . . . telam exorsus ad capiendos simplicium animos . . . Alcoranum vel Talmud.'—Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Heres.* ii. p. 246, and French edition, liv. vii. ch. ix.

† *Opusc. Franç. de Calvin*, p. 3. This letter is not in the Latin edition.

not like these good people to be offended against me,' he said. Calvin refused to fire a shot against his enemies lest he should wound his brethren.

But one day he was told of enormous and degrading sophisms. These teachers said to their followers: 'God has not placed in man a soul different from that of the beast. The soul is not a substance; it is only a quality of life, which proceeds from the throbbing of the arteries or the motion of the lungs. It cannot exist without the body, and perishes with it, until man rises again whole.'\* Calvin was thunderstruck. To be a man and to rank yourself among beasts, seemed to him foolish and impious. 'O God!' he exclaimed, 'the conflagration has increased, and thrown out flakes which, spreading far and wide, have turned to burning torches. . . O Lord, extinguish them, we pray thee, by that saving rain which thou reservest for thy Church!'+†

It was this gross materialism which absorbed Calvin's attention at Angoulême. He saw the evil which these teachers might do the Reform, and shuddered at the thought of the dangers which threatened the simple. 'Poor reeds tossed by every wind,' he exclaimed, 'whom the slightest breath shakes and bends, what will become of you?' . . . Then addressing the materialists he said: 'When the Lord says that the wicked kill the body but *cannot kill the soul*, does he not mean that the soul survives after death?‡ Know you not that, according to Scripture, the souls of the saints

\* 'Vim duntaxat vitam esse, aiunt, quæ ex spiritu arteriæ aut pulmonum agitatione ducitur.'—*Psychopannychia*, Op. Lat. p. 1.

† *Opusc. Franç.* p. 2, Preface.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 12. *Opusc. Lat.* p. 5.

stand before the throne of God, and that white robes were given unto every one of them?''\* Then resorting to irony, he continued: 'Sleepy souls, what, I pray, do you understand by these *white robes*? Do you take them for *pillows* on which the souls recline that are condemned to die?''† This mode of arguing was not rare in the sixteenth century. Calvin, agitated by these errors, took up his pen, and committed to paper the reflections which he published shortly after.

Calvin loved to repose from these struggles on the bosom of friendship. In the society of Du Tillet at Angoulême he found once more the charms which that of Duchemin had procured for him at Orleans. All his life he sought that noble intercourse, those *offices*, those kindnesses which friendship procures.‡ Even when deep in study, he loved to see the library door open, a well-known face appear, and a friend sit down by his side. Their conversations had an inexpressible sweetness for him. 'We have no need,' said the young canon, 'of those secrets which Pythagoras employed to produce an indissoluble friendship between his disciples. God has planted a mysterious seed between our souls, and that seed cannot die.'§

\* Revelation vi. 11, vii. 9.

† 'O spiritus dormitorii! Quid vobis sunt stolæ albæ? Pulvinaria scilicet in quibus ad somnum decubent?' *Opusc. Lat.* pp. 10, 11, 15.

‡ Montaigne, *Essais*, liv. i. ch. xxvii.

§ Correspondance de Calvin avec Du Tillet, pp. 29, 34, 48.



## CHAPTER II.

## THE EXILE TURNS PREACHER.

(DECEMBER 1533 AND JANUARY 1534.)

BY degrees, however, Calvin came out of his retirement. Shut up in his library, he began to sigh for country air, like Luther in the Wartburg. He went out sometimes, alone or with his friend, and rambled over the hills and quiet meadows watered by the Charente. The neighbourhood of Angoulême did not present the grandeur he was one day to find on the shores of the Lemán; but to him everything in creation was beautiful, because he saw the Creator everywhere. He could even be profoundly touched by the beauties of nature: ‘In the presence of the works of God,’ he said, ‘we are overcome with astonishment, and our tongues and senses fail us.’\* Not far from the city was a vineyard belonging to the canon, to which Du Tillet one day conducted his friend. The delighted Calvin returned there frequently; the remembrance of these visits still lingers in those parts, and the vineyard still goes by the name of *La Calvinie*.†

About this time their circle was increased: John Du Tillet, afterwards bishop of Meaux, arrived at Angou-

\* Calvin, *Psaumes*, ch. civ.

† Drelincourt, *Défense du Calvinisme*, p. 40; Crottet, *Chron. protest.* p. 96.

lême. He too became attached with his whole heart to Calvin: the latter, wishing to make himself useful to the two brothers, offered to teach them Greek, and while teaching them to read the New Testament, he led them to seek Christ. John listened greedily to the young doctor's words; hence he was long suspected by the Romanists, and having published in 1549 a very old manuscript, ascribed to Charlemagne, *Against Images*—the *Libri Carolini* are known to be opposed to them—he occasioned loud murmurs: 'A man who has been Calvin's pupil,' said the famous Cardinal du Perron, 'cannot well have any other opinion.'\*

These lessons, begun at Angoulême, were continued at Claix, where Du Tillet used to spend a part of the year. People asked in the village who that short, thin, pale young man was, who looked so serious and meek, and whom they often met with the Du Tillets. The best informed said that he gave them lessons in Greek. This study was a thing so extraordinary in the Angoumois, that the country people, ignorant of the professor's name, called him the *Greek of Claix*, or the *little Greek*. Some of the better people of the neighbourhood of Claix occasionally met the friends: they entered into conversation, and, says a contemporary, 'all who loved learning esteemed the young scholar;'<sup>†</sup> his knowledge of the classics, his taste so fine and accurate, attracted them to him. Certain friends of the Du Tillets, ecclesiastics of good family, men of letters and of feeling, soon shared this admi-

\* *Perromana*.

† 'Ut erat omnibus qui litteras amabant carus.'—Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Heres.* ii. 246.



ration of his virtues and his talents: they were Anthony de Chaillou, Prior of Bouteville, the Abbot of Balsac (near Jarnac), the famous De la Place, the Sieur de Torsac, Charles Girault, and others. Calvin's appearance, his simple dress and modest look interested these good men at first sight; and that clear and penetrating glance which he preserved until the last, soon revealed to them the keen intelligence and uprightness of the young *Greek*. They conceived the most hearty affection for him. They loved to hear him speak of the Saviour and of heaven, and yielded to his evangelical teaching without a thought of being faithless to that of the Church. This was the case with many Catholics at that time. They did not find in Calvin the things that make fine talkers in the world—'nonsense, merry jests, bantering, jokes, and all sorts of foolery, which pass away in smoke,'\* but the charms and profitableness of his conversation captivated all who heard him. De la Place in particular received a deep impression: 'I shall never forget,' he wrote years after, 'how your conversation made me better, when we were together at Angoulême. Oh! what shall I give you in this mortal life for the immortal life that I then received?'†

The frequent visits paid to the *Greek* by persons of consideration were soon remarked by the clergy; on the other hand, Bouteville desired to substitute more regular conferences for these simple conversations. He lived at the castle of Gérard, situated in a less

\* 'Sornettes, plaisantes rencontres, railleries, brocards, et toutes niaiseries, lesquelles s'en vont en fumée.'

† 'Neque enim sum immemor quantum me meliorem reddideris.'—De la Place to Calvin. Geneva MSS.

frequented district.\* ‘Come to my house,’ he said to his friends, ‘and let each of us state freely his convictions and objections.’ Calvin hesitated about going: ‘he was fond of solitude, and spoke little in company;’ but the thought of bringing his friends to the Gospel decided him.

One day, therefore, the modest doctor appeared in the midst of the Prior of Bouteville’s guests; one idea had absorbed him on the road to G rac. He thought that ‘truth is not a common thing; that it rises far above the capacity of the human understanding, and that we ought to purchase it at any price.’ At last when he joined his friends, after mutual greetings had been exchanged, he spoke to them of the subject that filled his heart. He opened the Bible, placed his hand on it, and said, ‘Let us find the truth!’ † . . . ‘The whole conference,’ says Florimond R mond, a staunch Catholic, ‘had no other object but *the investigation of truth*, a phrase which he had generally in his mouth.’ Calvin, however, did not set himself up as an oracle: addressing the conscience, he showed that Christ answered all the wants of the soul; the conversation soon became animated, his friends bringing forward objections. He never was at a loss; ‘having a marvellous facility,’ they said, ‘in penetrating suddenly the greatest difficulties and clearing them up.’ The visitors of G rac departed joyfully to their homes.

After these conferences, Calvin returned quietly to his retreat, and prayed for those to whom he had

\* ‘In arce quadam, non procul ab oppido Engolismensi sita.’—Flor. R mond, *Hist. Heres.* ii. p. 247.

† Flor. R mond, *Hist. Heres.* (French ed. liv. vii. p. 389; Lat. ed. liv. vii. p. 251.)

spoken and for others besides. ‘If sometimes we are cold in prayer,’ he said, ‘let us at once remember how many of our brethren are sinking under heavy burdens and grievous troubles; how many are oppressed by great anguish in their hearts and in all extremity of evils. . . We must have hearts of iron or steel, if such sluggishness in prayer cannot then be expelled from our bosoms.’ \*

Calvin felt the necessity of giving a solid foundation to the faith of his friends. ‘A tree that is not deeply rooted,’ he said, ‘is easily torn up by the first blast of the storm.’ He then committed to paper, as we have said, the first ideas of his *Christian Institutes*. One day, as he was starting for G rac, he took his notes with him, and read what he had just written to the circle assembled in the castle.† He did this several times afterwards; but the notes served merely as a text on which he commented with much eloquence. ‘No one can equal him,’ they said, ‘in loftiness of language, conciseness of arrangement, and majesty of style.’ He was not content with stating this doctrine or that: his fine understanding grasped the organic unity of the Christian truths, and he was able to present them as a divine whole.‡ It was no doubt the cry of his conscience which had led him to seek salvation in the Holy Scriptures; but he had not been able to study, compare, and fathom them without his understanding becoming enlightened, developed, and sanctified. The moral faculty is that which is first aroused in the

\* Calvini *Opp.* Ephes. vi.

† ‘Ibi *Institutiones* suas Calvinus depromebat quantum quoque die scripsisset ipsis recitans.’—Flor. R mond, *Hist. Heres.* ii. p. 247.

‡ ‘Theologi  su e mysteria revelabat atque explicabat.’—*Ibid.*

Christian; but it immediately provokes the exercise of the intellectual faculties. The citizens of the kingdom of God are not those who know, but those who believe; not the learned, but the regenerated. A church in which the intellectual faculty is above the moral faculty, does not bear the stamp of the Protestant and Christian principle; but every church in which the divine faculty of the understanding is neglected, and where learning is viewed with distrust, will easily fall into deplorable error.

Calvin's explanations, so deep and yet so clear, were not without their use. Du Tillet, Chaillou, De la Place, Torsac, and others mutually expressed their admiration and joy after the young doctor had retired; then, at their homes and apart from the world, they meditated on the consoling truths they had heard. Many of the most notable men of the district were won over to evangelical convictions.\* The Prior of Bouteville, in particular, showed from that time so much faith and zeal—he was, after Calvin's departure, so much the father and guide of those who had received the seed of truth, that he was called throughout the province: 'The Lutherans' Pope.' †

Calvin's sphere widened gradually: he wrote to those to whom he could not speak; ‡ and ere long his friends asked why they should keep for themselves alone the bread of life on which they fed? . . . One of them giving utterance to this thought to the young doctor added: 'But you can only reach the people in

\* 'Complures auctoritatis viros in suam sententiam pertraxit.'—Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Heres.* ii. p. 247.

† 'Butevillani prior lutheranorum papa postea cognominatus.'—*Ibid.*

‡ Du Perron, in the *Perroniana*, mentions several of Calvin's letters preserved by the Du Tillet.



the churches.' It was scarcely possible that Calvin, a fugitive from Paris, could visit the churches of the Angoumois as an evangelical missionary. 'Compose some short Christian exhortations for us,' said his friends to him, 'and we will give them to well-disposed parish priests to read to their congregations.'\* He did so, and humble clerks read these evangelical appeals from their pulpits, as well as they could. Thus Calvin preached through the mouths of priests to poor villagers, as he had addressed the imposing Sorbonne by the mouth of the rector.

This encouraged certain church dignitaries, especially the prior, who were at once his disciples and his patrons. If Calvin could not preach in French, why should he not teach in Latin? They surrounded the young doctor, representing to him that Latin, the language of the Roman Church, could not occasion any scandal, and asked him to deliver some Latin orations before the clergy. Calvin, firmly convinced that the reform ought to begin with the teaching of the priest, preached several Latin sermons in St. Peter's Church.† In this way he inaugurated his career as a reformer. All this could not be done without giving rise to murmurs. The faithful followers of Rome complained of him, of the prior, of all his friends, and this opposition might become dangerous. 'Fatal instrument,' says a Romanist with reference to Calvin's stay in the Angoumois, 'which

\* 'Amico cuidam cujus rogatu breves quasdam admonitiones Christianas scripsit.'—Beza, *Vita Calvini*, Lat. p. 4; French, p. 15. Bayle (sub voce *Calvin*) thinks that Du Tillet was the friend of whom Beza speaks; perhaps it was Chaillou.

† 'Semel atque iterum in æde S. Petri obivit.'—Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Heres.* ii. p. 251, &c. Crottet, *Chron. protest.* p. 97.

was destined to reduce France to greater extremities than the Saracens, the Germans, the English, and the house of Austria had done.\* He was not, however, the only one who was assisting in this excellent work.

\* Varillas, *Hist. des Révolutions Religieuses*, ii. p. 459.



## CHAPTER III.

CALVIN AT NÉRAC WITH ROUSSEL AND LEFÈVRE.

(WINTER OF 1533-34.)

WHILE Francis I. was endeavouring to stifle the Reformation in the north of France, it was spreading in the south, and many souls were converted in the districts bordering the Pyrenees. Evangelical Christians of other countries, some of whom were ministers, had taken refuge there, and 'towns and villages were *perversed* suddenly by hearing a single sermon,' says a Roman Catholic historian. On certain days, the simple peasants and even a few townspeople, arriving by different paths, would meet in a retired spot, in the bed of some dried-up torrent or in a cavern of the mountain. They had often to wait a long time for the preacher; the priests and their creatures forced him to make a wide circuit; sometimes he did not come at all. 'Then,' says a Catholic, 'women might be seen trampling on the modesty of their sex, taking a Bible, reading it and even assuming the boldness to interpret it, while waiting for the minister.'

At this epoch the Queen of Navarre arrived in the south. The noise caused in 1533 by the rector's sermon and Calvin's disappearance, had induced her to quit St. Germain for the states of her husband. Her

brother the king was then at a distance from Paris; her nieces with their governesses, Mesdames de Brissac and De Montreal, and the somewhat gloomy and oppressive etiquette which prevailed at the court of Queen Eleanor of Portugal, was not much to the taste of the lively and intelligent Margaret of Navarre. She therefore started for Nérac. Two litters with six mules, three baggage mules, and three or four carriages for the queen's women\* entered the city, and took the road that leads to the vast Gothic castle of the D'Albrets. It was a very scanty retinue for the sister of Francis I.

Margaret alighted from her litter, and was hardly settled in her apartments before she felt quite happy, for she had escaped at last from the pomps and struggles of the court of France. She laid aside her showy dresses and her grand manners; she hid the majesty of her house beneath a candour and friendliness that enchanted all who came near her. Dressed like a plain gentlewoman, she quitted the castle, crossed the Baise which flows through the city, and rambled along the beautiful walks of the neighbourhood, having for companions only the seneschales of Poitou or one of her young ladies of honour. But she had come for something more than this. Having fled far from the palaces and cities where the persecuting spirit of Rome and of the parliament was raging, she occupied herself more particularly in giving a fresh impulse to the evangelical movement in the southern provinces. Her activity was inexhaustible. She sent out *colporteurs* who made their way into houses, and while selling jewellery to the

\* Brantôme, *Capitaines illustres*, p. 235.

young women, presented them also with New Testaments, printed in fine characters, ruled in red and bound in vellum with gilt edges. 'The mere sight of these books,' says an historian, 'excited a desire to read them.' Around the queen everybody was in motion, labouring and murmuring like a hive of bees. 'Margaret,' says the king's historiographer, 'was the precious flower that adorned this parterre, and whose perfume attracted the best spirits of Europe to Bearn, as thyme attracts honey-bees.'\*

The queen might often be seen surrounded by a troop of sufferers, to whom she showed the tenderest respect. These were the refugees: Lefèvre of Etaples, Gerard Roussel, converted priests and monks, and a number of laymen, obliged to leave France, which they had been able to do, thanks to the queen who had assisted their flight. 'The good princess,' said a Catholic, 'has really nothing more at heart than to get those out of the way whom the king wishes to deliver up to the severities of justice. If I attempted to give the names of all those whom she has saved from punishment, I should never finish.'†

The Christians exiled for the Gospel did not make her forget the wretched of her own country. One day, when Roussel was describing to her the unfortunate situation of a poor family, Margaret said nothing; but returning to her chamber, she threw a Bearnese hood over her shoulders, and, followed by a single domestic, went out by a private door, hastened to the sufferers, and comforted them with the tenderest affection.‡

\* Olhagaray, *Hist. de Foix*, &c. p. 505.

† Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Heres.* viii. ch. ii.

‡ Sainte Marthe, *Oraison funèbre de la Reine de Navarre*.

She took pleasure in founding schools. Roussel, her chaplain, would visit the humble room in which the children of the people were learning to read and write, and going up to them would say: 'My dear children . . . the death of Christ is a real atonement. There is no sin so small as not to need it, or so great that it cannot be blotted out by it.\* Praying to God,' he would add, 'is not muttering with the lips: prayer is an ardent and serious converse with the Lord.†

There was one feature, however, in this awakening in the south which, in Calvin's eyes, rendered it imperfect and transitory, unless some remedy were applied to it. There was in it a certain halting between truth and error. The pious but weak Roussel manifested a lamentable spirit of compromise in his teaching. Wearied with the struggles he had gone through, he sheltered himself under the cloak of the Catholic Church. He did not pray to the Virgin, he administered the Holy Sacrament in two kinds; but he celebrated a kind of mass—a mournful and yet touching instance of that mixed Christianity which aimed at preserving evangelical life under catholic forms.

Calvin at Angoulême was not far from Nérac, and his eyes were often turned to that city. He longed to see Lefèvre before the old man was taken from the world, and was uneasy about Roussel, whom he feared to see yielding to the seductions of greatness. One of the christian thoughts that had laid the strongest hold on his mind, was the conviction that the wisdom from on high ought to reject every compromise sug-

\* MSS. fol. 2. Schmidt, p. 131.

† MSS. fol. 89 a, 177 b.—Ibid. pp. 145, 157.



gested by ambition or hypocrisy.\* Ought he not to try and bring back Roussel into the right path from which he appeared to be wandering? Calvin left Du Tillet's house probably about the end of February, and called upon Roussel as soon as he arrived at Nérac.

The most decided and the most moderate of the theologians of the sixteenth century were now face to face. Calvin, naturally timid and hesitating, 'would never have had the boldness so much as to open his mouth (to use his own words); but faith in Christ begot such a strong assurance in his heart, that he could not remain silent.' He, therefore, gave his opinion with decision: 'There is no good left in Catholicism,' he said. 'We must reestablish the Church in its ancient purity.'†—'What is that you say?' answered the astonished Roussel; 'God's house ought to be purified, no doubt, but not destroyed.'‡—'Impossible,' said the young reformer; 'the edifice is so bad that it cannot be repaired. We must pull it down entirely, and build another in its place.'§—Roussel exclaimed with alarm: 'We must cleanse the Church, but not by setting it on fire. If we take upon ourselves to pull it down, we shall be crushed under the ruins.' ||

Calvin retired in sorrow. Type of protestant

\* *Calvini Opp.* James iii. 17.

† 'Ecclesia in pristinam puritatem restituenda propositum ei aperuit, inquiens nihil omnino sani in catholica superesse ecclesia.'—Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Heres.* ii. p. 272.

‡ 'Non destruendam sed fulciendam.'—*Ibid.*

§ 'Vetus illud ædificium planissime esse dejiciendum, et novum instruendum.'—*Ibid.*

|| 'Ejusdem ruinis sepultum.'—*Ibid.*



decision in the sixteenth century, he always protested freely and boldly against everything that was contrary to the Gospel. He displayed this unshakeable firmness not only in opposition to catholic tendencies, but also against rationalistic ideas. It would not be difficult to find in Zwingli, in Melancthon, and even in Luther, some sprinkling of neology, of which the slightest traces cannot be found in Calvin.

Nérac, as we have said, sheltered another teacher—an old man whom age might have made weaker than Roussel, but who under his white hair and decrepid appearance concealed a living force, to be suddenly revived by contact with the great faith of the young scholar. Calvin asked for Lefèvre's house: everybody knew him: 'He is a little bit of a man, old as Herod, but lively as gunpowder,' they told him.\* As we have seen, Lefèvre had professed the great doctrine of justification by faith, even before Luther; but after so many years, the aged doctor still indulged in the vain hope of seeing Catholicism reform itself. 'There ought to be only one Church,' he would frequently repeat, and this idea prevented his separation from Rome. Nevertheless, his spiritualist views permitted him to preserve the unity of charity with all who loved Christ.

When Calvin was admitted into his presence, he discerned the great man under his puny stature, and was caught by the charm which he exercised over all who came near him. What mildness, what depth, what knowledge, modesty, candour, loftiness, piety, moral grandeur, and holiness, had been said of him! † It seemed as if all these virtues illuminated the old

\* Bayle, *Dictionnaire critique*, sub voce.

† 'Eruditione, pietate, animi generositate nobilissimus'—Bezae *Icones*.

man with heavenly brightness just as the night of the grave was about to cover him with its darkness. On his side, the young man pleased Lefèvre, who began to tell him how the opposition of the Sorbonne had compelled him to take refuge in the south, 'in order,' as he said, 'to escape the bloody hands of those doctors.'\*

Calvin endeavoured to remove the old man's illusions. He showed him that we must receive everything from the Word and from the grace of God. He spoke with clearness, with decision, and with energy. Lefèvre was moved—he reflected a little and weeping exclaimed: 'Alas! I know the truth, but I keep myself apart from those who profess it.' Recovering, however, from his trouble, he wiped his eyes, and seeing his young fellow-countryman 'rejecting all the fetters of this world and preparing to fight under the banner of Jesus,' he examined him more attentively, and asked himself if he had not before him that future reformer whom he had once foretold:† 'Young man,' he said, 'you will be one day a powerful instrument in the Lord's hand.‡ . . . The world will obstinately resist Jesus Christ, and everything will seem to conspire against the Son of God; but stand firm on that rock, and many will be broken against it. God will make use of you to restore the kingdom of heaven in France.'§ In 1509 Luther, being of the same age as Calvin in 1534, heard a similar prophecy from the mouth of a venerable doctor.

\* 'Ut vix illorum manus cruentas effugerit.'—Bezae *Icones*.

† 'Futurum augurant.'—Beza, *Vita Calvini*.

‡ 'Insigne instrumentum.'—*Ibid*.

§ 'Cœlestis in Gallia instaurandi regni.'—*Ibid*.

Yet, if we may believe a catholic historian, the old man did not stop there. His eyes, resting with kindness on the young man, expressed a certain fear. He fancied he saw a young horse which, however admirable its spirit, might dash beyond all restraint. 'Be on your guard,' he added, 'against the extreme ardour of your mind.\* Take Melanchthon as your pattern, and let your strength be always tempered with charity.' The old man pressed the young man's hand, and they parted never to see each other again.

Did Calvin see the Queen of Navarre also? It does not appear that Margaret was living at Nérac at that time; but he had some relations with her. It has been said that she felt an interest in his exile;† and it is possible that she had some share in the resolution he soon formed of quitting the south. She may have assured him that he had nothing to fear in Paris, if he committed no imprudence. But we have found nothing certain on these points.

For the present, Calvin returned to Du Tillet's. The visits made to Roussel and Lefèvre had taught him a lesson. He comprehended that it was not only souls blindly submissive to Rome that incurred imminent danger; he conceived the liveliest alarm for those minds which floated between the pope and the Word of God, either through weakness or want of light. He saw that as the limit between the two churches was not yet clearly traced, some of those who belonged to Rome were lingering beneath the fresh

\* 'Ne perfervidum hoc ingenium omnia misceret atque everteret.'—Flor. Rémond, ii. p. 272.

† Freer's *Life of Marguerite*, ii. p. 120.

and verdant shades of the Gospel, while others who ought to belong to the Reformation still wandered beneath the gothic arches of Romish cathedrals and prostrated themselves at the foot of Romish altars. This state of things—possibly approved of by many—Calvin thought dangerous, and his principles going farther, he undertook ‘to rebuke freely (as he says) those who yoked with unbelievers, keeping them company in outward idolatry.’ \*

\* ‘Rédarguer librement ceux qui s’accouplant avec les infidèles, leur tenaient compagnie en idolâtrie externe.’—Calvin, *Comm. in 2 ad Cor.*, cap. vii.

## CHAPTER IV.

A DRAMATIC REPRESENTATION AT THE COURT OF NAVARRE.

(WINTER OF 1533-34.)

HENRY and Margaret having quitted Nérac for Pau, where they intended passing the winter, had reached those picturesque heights, separated by a ravine, on which the city stands, and had entered the castle. The queen had found pleasure in adorning it with the most magnificent gardens then known in Europe, and liked to walk in them, conversing with Cardinal de Foix, the Bishop of Tarbes, and many other distinguished persons who admired her wit and grace. And yet these ecclesiastics often caused her 'much vexation.' Surrounded by persons who made a regular report to Francis I., watched by the king her husband and the dignitaries of the Church who were at her court, this pious but weak woman bent under the weight. She began the day by attending morning service in the catholic church of the parish; then in the afternoon she privately collected in her chamber the evangelical members of her court, and the little band of exiles, with a few men and women of the people who, coming forward awkwardly, took their seats timidly on the handsome furniture of the queen. Roussel, Lefèvre, or some other minister, delivered an exhortation, and the little assembly separated, feeling that God had really been present in the midst of them.\*

\* Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Heres.* lib. vii. cap. iii.



One day some of these humble believers desired to partake of the Lord's Supper. The queen was embarrassed: she did not dare celebrate it in the church, nor even in her own room, lest one of the cardinals should enter suddenly... After some reflection Margaret thought she had found what was wanted. Under the terrace of the castle there was a large hall called *the Mint*, a secret underground place that could be approached without attracting notice. By the queen's orders her servants privately carried a table there, covered it with a white cloth, and placed a basin on it containing 'a few slices of plain bread,' and by its side some cups full of wine 'instead of chalices.'—'Such are their altars!' ironically exclaims the catholic historian.

On the appointed day, the believers, silent and agitated, came and took their places not without fear of being discovered. The queen, forgetting the pomps of the Louvre, sat down among them as a simple Christian. Roussel appeared, but not in sacerdotal costume, and stood in front of the table. 'Those who believe that there is nothing but an empty sign in the Sacrament,' he said, 'are not of the school of faith.\*' He took common bread, says the indignant catholic narrator, 'and not little round wafers stamped with images.'—'Remember,' continued Roussel with a grave voice, 'that Christ suffered and died for us.' He then handed round the cup 'without making the sign of the cross!' The worshippers, deeply moved, bore a heavenly expression on their faces and felt the presence of the Lord: 'The same Christ

\* MS. de la Biblioth. impér., No. 7021, fol. 146. Schmidt, *Roussel*, p. 151.

dwelt in the minister and in the people.' No spy nor cardinal appeared, and the communicants, after presenting an offering for the poor, withdrew in peace.\*

Notwithstanding its secrecy, this celebration was talked about in the castle. The King of Navarre was quite annoyed at it. A thoughtless, changeable, and ever violent man, and liable to occasional worldly relapses, he began to grow impatient at his wife's piety, and especially at the 'feastings in the cellar.' He was habitually in a bad humour, and found fault with all that Margaret did.

One day as he returned to the castle from a hunting-party, he asked where the queen was. He was told that a minister was preaching in her chamber. At these words the king's face flushed. A faithful servant ran to warn the queen : ministers and hearers escaped by a back way, and they had hardly left the room, when Henry entered abruptly. He stopped, looked round him, and seeing only the queen, agitated and trembling, he struck her in the face, saying : 'Madame, you desire to know too much.' He then left her indignant and confounded. This affront offered to the dignity of the royal family of France did not pass unnoticed : Francis 'scolded Henry d'Albret soundly,' says Brantôme.†

Margaret, eager to win over her husband and to be agreeable to her court, resolved to have a representation of some biblical dramas. Possibly she might by this means reach those who would not come to the sermons. She took for her subject *The Birth*

\* Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Heres.* lib. viii. cap. xii.

† Brantôme, *Mémoires*. De Coste, *Reines illustres*. Matthieu, *Hist. de François I.*

of the *Saviour*, and having completed her poem distributed the parts among certain noble maidens. These biblical representations, which displeased Calvin, because of their theatrical form, and the Romish clergy because of their evangelical truths, charmed the middle party, and as they belong to the religious history of the epoch, we cannot pass them by unnoticed. Margaret fitted up the great hall of the castle as a theatre. The scenery was prepared, and shortly after Christmas placards announced the representation of 'The Nativity of Jesus Christ.'\*

When the day came the hall was crowded. In the front rank of the amphitheatre sat the king and queen, the latter wearing a plain dress trimmed with marten's fur and a Bearnese hood. Near them were the Cardinals De Grammont and De Foix with other members of the clergy. Around the royal pair were Margaret's inseparable maids of honour—Mademoiselle de St. Pather, the usual distributor of her alms, Mademoiselle de la Batenage, Blanche de Tournon, Françoise de Clermont, Madame d'Avangour, the greatest 'eaves-dropper' of the court, the chancellor, chamberlains, and almoners. Her ten stewards, her esquires and thirty-eight maids, her seventeen secretaries, and her twenty valets-de-chambre were most of them present.† The invited strangers occupied seats according to their rank. A first representation has rarely excited more curiosity.

The first act begins. The scene is placed at Nazareth, in the house of a poor carpenter. A man

\* This drama, which we have been forced to abridge, will be found in the *Marguerites de la Marguerite*, tom. i. pp. 148–206.

† *Marguerite d'Angoulême*, par le comte de la Ferrière-Percy, pp. 9, 13.

in the prime of life and a young woman are talking together. A proclamation has just been published in the market-place ordering every one to go to the city of their family to be registered. But these poor people belong to Bethlehem, and Bethlehem is a long way from Nazareth. The woman is soon to become a mother, and the man is uneasy about the consequences of the journey. The young Israelitish woman, whose calm meek features indicate the serenity of a pious soul, says to him :

... Us no danger shall come nigh,  
For He whose power o'ershadowed me,  
Holds in his hand both fruit and tree.\*

The scene changes, and we are at Bethlehem. It is quite dark, but a few lights are visible through the windows of the houses. The same man and woman—they are Joseph and Mary—have just arrived from Nazareth after a fatiguing journey. Joseph, still anxious, begins :

It is late and already night . . .  
Let us approach the nearest light.

He knocks at the door, and asks to be admitted. The owner of the house looks contemptuously on them and says that he lodges none but rich people. Joseph goes a little farther on and knocks at another door :

Will you please lodge my wife and me ?  
For the poor woman, as you see,  
Is near her time.

This man looks as contemptuously upon them as the other, and answers that he takes in none but

\* In translating the extracts for this poem, no attempt has been made to give a polish to the verses, which was not found in the original.



noblemen. Joseph, still undiscouraged, points out a third man to his wife and says :

Here is a man with pleasant look.

He speaks to him, but the man is a *bon vivant*, and is annoyed by the care-worn appearance of the travellers. 'I like,' he says,

Dances, sports, women, good-cheer . . .  
No kill-joys are wanted here.  
Pass on, my friends ;

Joseph, with a deep sigh :

Onward then, and God will tell  
Where he pleases we should dwell.

But wearied by the journey, and uneasy about her condition, Mary begins to change countenance :

Woe's me, I feel the hour draw near  
For the long-looked-for fruit t'appear.

At these words, the startled Joseph looks round him, and discovering at last a poor stable, which the wind penetrates on every side, he presses Mary to enter it :

I will take care  
To shelter you from every hurtful air.

He settles the young woman as comfortably as he can in the rude shed, and prepares to go into the town to get what she requires.

MARY.

Go, go, my friend : I shall not be alone,  
For where God is, there also is my home.

Mary remaining alone offers up a touching prayer to her heavenly Father ; then, yielding to her fatigue, she lies down upon the straw and falls asleep.



The scene changes to heaven. The eyes of the Lord, which 'look upon the sons of men,' are turned upon the earth, and are fixed with kindness on Mary, whose sleep is gentle and peaceful. Then as the great moment approaches, He orders the angels to leave heaven and announce to mankind the news of a great joy. He gives each of them a message; some are to go to Mary, others to Simeon. The humblest of them says:

... And I, Lord ...  
I will go seek the least of all,  
And tell him how *great* he has become  
Since the great one has become small.

Hymns of praise immediately resound through heaven:

Glory to Thee, Almighty Lord!

And the angels depart upon their mission.

The scene changes, and we are once more in the stable at Bethlehem. Mary awakes and is still alone. Her heart is agitated by the most astounding thoughts: the mystery of God which she discerns surprises and confounds her.

Strange! a virgin... yet a mother  
Of a son above all other,  
Very God and very man!  
Emanuel! of the Father dearest Son...  
May my hands be joined with thine?  
May thy lips be touched by mine?

At this moment the angels sent by God arrive: they enter the wretched stable, filling it with their glory, and each salutes the poor virgin of Nazareth in his own fashion. One of them says:

All hail, happy dame,  
Mother of the Son thou lov'st so dearly!

Another, whose character appears to be humility, addresses the new-born child :

Little child, pray spare me not . . .  
Though I'm small I shall delight  
To wait upon you day and night,  
To wash you or to warm your bed \* . . .

At this point Joseph returns with the provisions he has bought ; he is distressed at his inability to receive becomingly this child of heaven, but resolving to give all that he has, he advances towards the stable. On a sudden he stops in surprise . . . he looks . . . a divine light fills the humble shed, and shines all around.

What a strange gleam  
There comes from within !  
I'm like a man in a maze :  
I am quite sure  
I never before  
Saw such a glorious blaze.

He stops at the threshold and looks in. The angels have disappeared, and he says :

Mary, I see,  
Has not lost her glee,  
Her face with joy runs o'er . . .  
But why does she stare,  
This virgin dear,  
So constantly on the floor ?

Joseph looks more carefully, as he stands motionless at the door, and discovers Jesus who has just been born :

Yes ! 't is the child !

The honest carpenter does not know what to do ; he

Petit enfant, ne veuillez épargner  
Moi très-petit . . . car, soit pour vous baigner,  
Ou pour chauffer vos draps en votre lit,  
À vous servir je prendrai grand délit (*délice.*)

dares not approach, and yet he cannot remain apart; a struggle takes place in his soul.

Here will I stay . . .

No ! I must go in.

At last Joseph comes forward : he looks at the child, and kneeling humbly before him, worships and kisses him.

With this kiss I would cool

My heart with charity burning.

What a charming child,

So handsome and mild,

And that 's the truth, I assure you.

Mary is uneasy : she looks at the child, so weak and tender, and is distressed at having nothing to wrap him in,

For the night is cold.

JOSEPH.

I shall light this taper.

He then lights the lamp.

Where shall we put him ? In the manger here . . .

No better place in all the inn.

This was the end of the first act. The spectators expressed the interest they felt in the drama, at once so serious and so holy; and even the Cardinals De Grammont and De Foix found nothing in it contrary to the doctrines of the Church. As that was a time when people were very fond of diversion, joke and jest followed. Several comic characters appeared in the interlude, especially a poor monk, who was the soul of the farce.\* This was not Margaret's composition : even the catholics did not charge her with

\* ' Qui pro primo esset.'—Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Heres.* vii. cap. iii.

it. The jesters retired at last, and the drama proceeded.

The scene represented the fields round Bethlehem, where shepherds and shepherdesses were keeping their flocks during the watches of the night. One shepherd worn out with labour, another with 'hunting the wolf,' had fallen asleep; some shepherdesses followed their example; but one shepherd and one shepherdess were awake and communicating their thoughts to each other.

THIRD SHEPHERD.

A something keeps me wide awake;  
My usual sleep I cannot take.  
It is not my flock, I'm sure,  
For the fold is quite secure;  
In my heart a joy I feel  
And I seem good news to hear . . .  
Meanwhile I shall turn my eyes  
To the star-bespangled skies.

He contemplates the firmament.

FIRST SHEPHERDESS.

What seest thou, brother, when thine eye  
Thou turn'st admiring to the sky?

THIRD SHEPHERD.

I admire the great Creator  
Who hath made all things, and we  
Are his temple . . .

FIRST SHEPHERDESS.

Tell me, shepherd, what He promised  
To the patriarchs who waited  
Patiently for ages? . . .

THIRD SHEPHERD.

He has promised the Messiah,  
His true Son, through whom alone  
Life to us has been restored,  
And salvation.

FIRST SHEPHERDESS.

Would to God the hour was nigh !

THIRD SHEPHERD.

Come, Lord, and no longer tarry !

Suddenly a bright light shines over the fields of Bethlehem, and a heavenly voice says :

Shepherds, awake, arise !

Behold the happy day,

When God by works for ever new

Shall his great love display.

The sleeping shepherds and shepherdesses awake ; they look about them and perceive the angels surrounded with a heavenly glory.

FIRST SHEPHERD.

Heavens ! what means this brightness here ?

I am almost numbed with fear.

SECOND SHEPHERDESS.

By this clear and glorious light

My weak eyes are dazzled quite.

FIRST ANGEL.

Gentle shepherds, do not fear,

I am come your hearts to cheer,

With glad tidings . . .

For to you upon this morn

The Saviour Jesus Christ is born.

As 'twas writ ; and this the sign

How to know the child divine ;

Wrapped in swaddling bands, the Son

Has a manger for a throne . . .

The Jesus whom the Lord has sent

To fulfil his covenant.

All the angels then sing the hymn of praise :

Glory be to God most high.

SECOND SHEPHERD.

Let us haste and feast our eyes

Where the hope of mortals lies.



THIRD SHEPHERD.

In a hut so mean and poor,  
If we cannot pass the door,  
We can through some crevice spy \*  
Where our Lord and King doth lie.

The shepherds and shepherdesses converse as they go on the reception they will give to the Messiah, with a simplicity that may appear excessive, but which is not devoid of grace and genuineness.

FIRST SHEPHERD AND SHEPHERDESS.

Let us from our plenty bear  
Presents to their scanty fare.

THIRD SHEPHERD.

Here's a cheese I 'll take with me  
In this basket.

SECOND SHEPHERD.

And you see,  
This great bowl of milk I 'll carry,  
And I hope 't will please sweet Mary.

FIRST SHEPHERD.

I shall give this cage and bird.

SECOND SHEPHERD.

I this faggot, for, my word !  
The weather 's cold.

THIRD SHEPHERD.

This rude toy,  
This rustic flute will please the boy.

FIRST SHEPHERDESS.

I will kiss his very cheek . . .

SECOND SHEPHERD.

Nay ! 't is honour sure enough  
But to kiss him in the foot.†

---

\* Il y aura quelque fente ou crevasse.

† C'est assez au talon.

Shepherds and shepherdesses all leave the fields and hurry to Bethlehem.

The scene again changes to this town, where the shepherds and shepherdesses arrive and look for the place where the child lies.

SECOND SHEPHERD.

In this house with paint so gay  
The holy child would never stay.

THIRD SHEPHERD.

Nor in this palace would he rest,  
But rather in some humbler nest.

FIRST SHEPHERDESS, *searching carefully.*

There's a place in this rude rock;  
Can it be the honoured spot?

Shepherds and shepherdesses draw near, and looking through the cracks in the wall of the poor stable, discover Mary and Jesus. The second shepherd exclaims with rapture:

There's the child . . . and there's the mother . . .

THIRD SHEPHERDESS.

See how mild  
Hangs on his mother's breast the child.

SECOND SHEPHERD.

Call yon man to ope the door . . .  
(*to Joseph*) Hola! master . . .

JOSEPH.

What means that noise without?

FIRST SHEPHERD.

The true fruit of heaven we seek.

MARY.

If God hath this great fact revealed,  
By us it must not be concealed;  
For to believers we the Christ must show:  
Open the door . . .

JOSEPH, *opening the door.*

You can come in.

The shepherds and shepherdesses approach respectfully, and puny as the child appears, they recognise in him the height of the eternal Majesty, and worship him :

THIRD SHEPHERD.

. . . Thou art the promised seed  
To Adam after his misdeed.  
Abraham and David on this relied,  
And both alike were justified.

SECOND SHEPHERD.

The eye beholds a weak and powerless child ;  
But faith which comes of knowledge bids us bow  
In honour and in adoration at his feet,  
As the true God.

After the adoration of the shepherds, the shepherdesses, a little curious, surround Mary and enter into conversation with her.

THIRD SHEPHERDESS.

How is't no costly robes he owns :  
Silver and gold and precious stones ?

MARY.

Simplicity he liketh best,  
Nor will he in choice clothes be dressed.

The first streaks of dawn begin to appear.

SECOND SHEPHERD.

The day is near . . . I must begone.

FIRST SHEPHERDESS, *approaching Mary*.

May I just give his little toe  
One single kiss before I go.\*

THIRD SHEPHERDESS.

Our hands have touched, our eyes have seen,  
The Lamb who takes away our sin.

---

\* Madame, au moins, son petit bout d'orteil  
Pour le baiser.

The shepherds and shepherdesses then present their humble offerings.

FIRST SHEPHERD.

Serving thee we'll live and die,  
For without thee life is naught.

The second act being finished, a new interlude was introduced to make the spectators merry. The jesters reappeared and recited several rondeaux, always containing some piquant and unexpected joke, which called forth the laughter of the audience. The burden of the *virelais* (poems composed of very short lines, and with two rhymes) usually turned on some monk, which greatly diverted the spectators. The cardinals and the catholics who took pleasure in the drama were annoyed by the satires.\*

The third act began. Satan, who was making the tour of the world, arrived over the fields of Bethlehem, whither the shepherds had returned, and absorbed in his own thoughts, said to himself:

I have reigned until this hour  
And subdued earth to my power;  
With God above have warred unceasing,  
And my triumphs are increasing.

The shepherdesses, to whom he was invisible, expressed their joy in hymns:

Shepherdesses, maidens fair,  
Listen to the song we sing:  
Tidings of great joy we bring,  
That take away all mortal care.

Satan stopped and listened: becoming alarmed, he exclaimed:

This is a hymn that chills my blood . . .  
What tidings have they heard?

---

\* Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Heres.* vii. cap. iii.

The shepherdesses, still unconscious of Satan's presence, continue singing :

Hail ! to the Virgin-born,  
Hail ! to the Lord and Son,  
Who in this happy morn,  
The veil of earth puts on.  
Loud praise to God be given  
Who makes us heirs of heaven.

Satan listening, and still more uneasy :

To learn this secret, how I 've toiled !  
Shall it be hidden from me now ?

He disguises himself, and approaches the shepherds under the form of a great lord, and says to them :

Whence come you ?

FIRST SHEPHERD.

From seeing Christ, the Saviour of mankind,  
By whom in God we are regenerate.  
Will you not go and see him, mighty lord ?  
I 'll show the way.

SATAN.

Can this be true, or is it all a dream ?

SECOND SHEPHERD.

Go and see for yourself . . .

SATAN.

God from his throne on high  
For this world does not care . . .  
I am its king . . . yes, I . . .

. . . . .

Come with me and make good cheer . . .  
But you must believe no mo'  
That God can ever stoop so low.

THIRD SHEPHERD.

He is my father, brother, all . . .  
I am his from head to foot.\*  
God is for me, and no false one  
Shall this heavenly faith uproot.

---

\* Je suis à lui de l'un à l'autre bout.



SATAN.

Fools and madmen ! are ye gods ? . . .

FIRST SHEPHERD.

To the Son we leave the glory  
Of being God. Enough for us  
To be whatso'er he pleases,  
And to know that He's the great I AM.

SATAN.

*Can you understand the Scriptures ?*

THIRD SHEPHERD.

*With all humbleness we read them.*

SATAN.

Were he your father as you call him,  
Would he leave you thus accursed,  
Suffering poverty and want ?  
Blind ones, open wide your eyes !  
Have you ever known a rich man  
Leave his son, like field untilld ?  
Sons of God, indeed ! whose store  
Are cold and hunger, rags, and all that's poor.

SECOND SHEPHERD.

More we suffer, more our joys redouble ;  
For all your pleasures we'll not give a double.\*

THIRD SHEPHERD.

In our hearts the Christ doth dwell  
Who has conquered death and hell.

At these words Satan becomes confused ; he calls to mind his former defeats, and knowing that the Son of God must crush him under his feet, exclaims in terror :

\* Plus nous souffrons, plus notre joie redouble ;  
De vos plaisirs ne donnons pas un double.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The *double* was the sixth part of a *sou*.

Murdered Lamb, who didst expel  
 Me and mine from heaven to hell . . .  
 Thou still pursuest, and no place  
 Can hide me from thy angry face.

Then the mysterious voice of God is heard again proclaiming the victory of the new-born child :

Satan's tyrant reign is o'er;  
 By the spotless Lamb 'tis ended,  
 Who to suffer on the cross  
 For us sinners has consented . . .  
 At my right the Lamb shall sit . . .  
 Angels sing the Lamb exalted  
 High o'er all, and Satan quelled.

Then the angels sing the song of triumph, which ends the play :

Glory be to God on high,  
 Who our greatest enemy,  
 Satan, hath o'erthrown.  
 Honours to the Lamb express  
 By whom all the blessedness  
 Of the Father is made known.

The representation was finished and every one retired in admiration. The king was grateful for this condescension in his wife, and Margaret took advantage of it to induce him to listen to a few sermons. 'From the comedy he went to the preaching, which took place in the queen's chamber,' says a contemporary historian.\*

All were not equally satisfied with these representations. Cardinals De Grammont and De Foix withdrew from the court, while the stricter christians asked if it was lawful to introduce angels and even God himself on the stage. If Calvin had gone on

\* Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Hérés.* vii. cap. iii.

from Nérac to Pau, and had been present, not far from the cardinals, at this mystery-play, he would no doubt have blamed such performances, which he termed 'christianity in disguise.'

It is time to follow the reformer.

## CHAPTER V.

CALVIN AT POITIERS, AT THE BASSES-TREILLES, AND IN  
ST. BENEDICT'S CAVES.

(SPRING 1534.)

CALVIN meditated leaving the South. He had found a retreat in the hour of danger; but as the storm seemed to blow over, he could go at last from the place where he had been hidden, and resume a career that had been so roughly interrupted. He was not at ease in Angoulême. On the one hand the conversion of Du Tillet and some of his friends gave rise to rumours among the clergy and people; and on the other, certain traditional elements that Margaret and some of his hearers at Gêrac desired to retain, were displeasing to the reformer. Altars, images, holidays dedicated to Mary and the saints, confessors and confession—none of these things appeared to him scriptural, and he sighed for the time when he could make the evangelical principle prevail in all its integrity. He was in the habit of saying: ‘Above all things we must confess our Lord fully, without shrinking from anything soever.’\*

Where should he go? His thoughts led him first to Poitiers, whence he proposed to visit Orleans,

\* *Lettres françaises de Calvin*, i. p. 119.

Paris, and then Germany and Switzerland, to study and gain knowledge by intercourse with the reformers. In their conversations at G rac the Sieur de Torras had often spoken of Pierre de la Place, who was then studying at Poitiers. Calvin would also meet there with Charles le Sage, regent of the university, like himself a native of Noyon. One consideration restrained him: Could he leave Du Tillet? ‘Where you go, I will go,’ said the young canon; ‘my heart is filled with the faith that animates you.’\* The idea of enjoying Calvin’s society at every moment, and of seeing in Switzerland and Germany the noble-hearted men who were reforming the Church, filled him with joy.†

The two friends departed: Calvin under the name of Charles d’Espeville, and Du Tillet under that of Hautmont, which seems to have been borne by some members of his family. They arrived (probably about the end of March 1534) in those plains and heaths of Poitou where so many great battles had been fought, and where a humble combatant was approaching to engage in nobler contests. Few provinces in France were so well prepared. Abelard, who had lived in these western districts, had left behind him some traces of the doubts set forth in his celebrated treatise, *Sic et Non* (Yes and No),‡ on the doctrines of the Church. Here too a writer, unconnected with the Reform, had attacked the *papomania*, and the clergy, who formed (it was said) a third part

\* ‘Tilius haustis animo Calvini opinionibus.’—Flor. R mond, *Hist. H r s.* ii.

† ‘Miro desiderio eos videndi incensus, qui catholic e ecclesi e bellum indixerant.’—*Ibid.*

‡ See M. Cousin’s excellent edition.



of the population, exasperated the two others by their avarice and irregularities.

Calvin stayed at Poitiers with Messire Fouquet, prior of Trois-Moutiers, a learned ecclesiastic, and a friend of the Du Tillet, who had a house there. The university was flourishing, it possessed learned professors, and had a famous library. The desire of understanding—a feeling springing up everywhere in France—was particularly felt here. The prior of Trois-Moutiers conversed with his two guests on the public disputations that were going on in the university. This excited Calvin's attention: he went to the hall, sat down on one of the benches, and listened attentively. No one, as he looked at this stranger, would have supposed that under those pale, unattractive features was hidden one of the heroes who change the face of the world in the name of truth alone. Beneath much quibbling and idle trash the young doctor could see flashes of light here and there. After the disputation, he called upon those combatants from whom he had heard the language of christianity; he stated his own ideas, and ere long the beauty of his genius and the frankness of his language won them over. Calvin and these generous men became friends and visited each other; at length, says an historian, 'they began to take walks together without the city,'\* and as they walked along the banks of the little river Clain, or rambled over the fields, the young doctor spoke to them openly of Christ and of eternity.

They did not trouble themselves, indeed, with scholastic theology and metaphysical formulas: Calvin aimed at the conquest of their souls. He required in

\* Varillas, *Hist. des Rév. rel.*, ii. p. 473.

every one the formation of a new man, and cared about nothing else. In the midst of the disheartening weaknesses and immense necessities of fallen humanity, a great spiritual restoration must be carried out; the hour had come, and to accomplish the work it needed special men invested with power from on high. Calvin was one of these strong men, whom God has sent to the aid of human decay. At the moment of the awakening, after the slumber of the Middle Ages, the heavenly Father bestowed new creative forces on mankind. The Gospel, then restored to the world, possessed a beauty which attracted men's souls, and an authority which wrought in them an absolute obedience: these are the two regenerating elements. All over Europe prophets arose among the people, but they did not prophesy at their own impulse. Above them was the sovereign, free, living, supernatural God who worked in them with supreme power.

Calvin was about to begin at Poitiers a work of regeneration. Indeed no long time elapsed before numerous hearers crowded round him. Some were offended by his words; and there were some who, looking only for disputations and sophistry, tormented the young doctor with their accustomed insolence; while others opposed the heretic 'with dilemmas and cunning catches.' Others, again, who thought themselves masters of the world, turned their backs on him, 'as if he were an ordinary mountebank.' Calvin, surprised at such resistance, 'instead of entangling himself in useless disputes,' seriously thrust aside these frivolous subtleties, and 'put forward what is true.'\*

\* 'Riotes et cavillations . . . arguments cornus et surprises subtiles . . . comme s'il était un bailleur de sornettes ordinaires . . . au lieu de s'en-

But if the doctrine he announced met with enemies, it also met with friends. The word of God perpetually separates light from darkness in the spiritual world, as it did at the time of the creation of heaven and earth. Generous men gathered eagerly round the young and powerful doctor. These were Albert Babinot, jurist, poet, and law-reader; Anthony Veron, procureur to the lower court; Anthony de la Dugie, doctor-regent; Jean Boisseau de la Borderie, advocate; Jean Vernou of Poitiers, the Sieur de St. Vertumien, and Charles le Sage, doctor-regent, a man of great esteem, who possessed the entire confidence of Madame, the king's mother.\* One of these distinguished men especially won Calvin's heart: it was Pierre de la Place, a native of Angoulême, a friend of Du Tillet, afterwards president of the Court of Aids, and one of the St. Bartholomew martyrs. But Le Sage, another of these eminent men, kept himself rather aloof; he was from Noyon, and was not very anxious to put himself in the train of the son of the old episcopal secretary; moreover, he believed sincerely in the miracle of transubstantiation.

This group of distinguished men, which now gathered round Calvin at Poitiers, as formerly at Angoulême, fixed the attention of those who had any intercourse with him. Calvin's attractive power, which is somewhat doubted in the present day, struck even his enemies. 'Knowledge as well as virtue,' says one of

tortiller dans des contestations superflues . . . il mettait en avant ce qui est ferme.'

\* 'Magnæ existimationis vir, præsertim apud regis matrem.'—Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Hérés.* ii. p. 251.

them on this occasion, 'soon wins love, and eminent minds, whether for good or evil, require little time to become known. Calvin, having retired to Poitiers, soon met with good store of friends.'\* He met them at the university, went to see them at their houses, courted their society, and spoke freely of the knowledge of God.† On many points they thought from the very first like him. When he complained 'that they worshipped stocks and stones, prayed to the dead, trusted in vain things, and desired to serve God by idle ceremonies,'‡ everybody agreed with him, even Le Sage. But the young doctor went still farther. Doubtless he condemned 'a rugged austerity; he recommended people to be *loving* (aimables) and kind to their neighbours.'§ But at the same time, he was true, even at the risk of displeasing. Being present one day when some sincere catholics were defending the doctrine of transubstantiation, Calvin unhesitatingly declared, that we must receive Christ, even his body and blood, by faith, by the spirit which gives life, and not by a sensual eating with the mouth. Le Sage exclaimed, quite shocked, that this was the opinion of the heretic Wickliffe, and even La Place 'stopped short in alarm, at seeing so great a falling off from the religion in which he had been strictly bred.'|| Calvin was cut to the heart.

But if he lost some friends, he gained others. The chief magistrate of Poitiers, Lieutenant-general Pierre

\* Flor. Rémond, *Hist. des Hérésies* (éd. fr.), p. 890.

† P. de Farnace, *Brief Recueil de la Vie de Messire P. de la Place*, p. 11 sqq. Bayle's *Diet. Hist.* sub voce 'De la Place.'

‡ Calvin, *Lettres Françaises*, i. pp. 70-71.

§ Calvin on James, iv. 17.

|| P. de Farnace, *Brief Recueil*, p. 11 sqq.



Regnier de la Planche, desired to see him, and invited him to dine with De la Dugie, Babinot, Véron, Vernou, and other acquaintances. Calvin accepted the invitation, which caused some astonishment. 'This innovator,' said the catholics, 'desires to court the magistrates, in order that they may give him importance by their condescension.' Calvin never made any such calculations, but he was 'burning with great zeal to extend the glory of the Lord on every side.' He was received with respect, and took his seat at the table; during dinner the conversation turned, it would seem, on mere common-places. As soon as the meal was over, the company rose and went into the garden. It was in this place, known as the *Basses Treilles*, that the Sieur de la Planche often received his friends. That magistrate, Calvin, Babinot, and the other guests conversed as they walked, and the master of the house, turning the conversation on Luther and Zwingle, blamed the reformers, and especially their opinions on the mass. 'This was a frequent topic of conversation,' says a writer of the sixteenth century, 'not only among the learned, but among the common people, and was even talked of at table.' Calvin, who was well informed and prepared, entered upon the subject and explained the chief points. 'Luther saw the truth,' he said, 'but he is like those who are walking through a long and winding road; they perceive afar the dim glimmer of a lamp, by means of which they can grope their way along the path they must follow. Zwingle approached the light, but like those who rush too hastily to good, he went beyond it.'\* Then

\* Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Hérés.* vii. cap. xi. Rémond exaggerates Calvin's opinion about Luther and Zwingle.



wishing them to understand what there was in the Lord's Supper, he stated more in detail the idea of the presence of Christ, a real one no doubt, but to be received by faith and not by the mouth: thus taking a middle position between Zwingli and Luther. These discourses, being as clear as they were forcible, convinced the lieutenant-general and the friends he had assembled. Calvin was requested to commit them to writing, which he did, adds the historian, with an eloquence that brought him new disciples. Regnier de la Planche was gained to protestantism, and his son Louis subsequently took part in the struggles against the Guises. It was he whom Catherine de Medici perfidiously interrogated one day in her closet, whilst the Cardinal of Lorraine was hidden behind the tapestry.

Henceforth the garden of the Basses-Treilles became a favourite resort with Calvin: he was accustomed to go there freely and openly. There, like Socrates in the garden of Academe, the young christian Plato and his friends sought for truth.\* The truth which the Reformation was then restoring to the world, was of quite a different order, and of far greater power than that of the Greek philosophers. Wherever its voice was heard, the idea of a clerical priesthood disappeared, the prerogatives of monastic life vanished, and a personal, individual, living Christianity took their place. The divine revelations were given to laymen in their mother-tongue, and the sacraments, stripped of their pretended magical virtues, exercised a spiritual influence over the heart. Such were the

\* 'Inter sylvas Academi quærere verum.'—Horace.

principles professed by Calvin in the garden of the lieutenant-general. As he walked up and down beneath the pleasant shade, he spoke to his friend of the heavenly Father, of his only Son, of grace, and of eternal life. His disciples, as they listened, imagined that all things were about to become new, and said to one another that now at last a barren formalism in the church would give way to a living power—a breath from heaven. The catholics of Poitiers were distressed. ‘As our first parents,’ they said, ‘were enchanted in a garden, so it was in the lieutenant-general’s garden of the Basses-Treilles that this handful of men were cajoled and duped by Calvin, who easily made a breach in the souls of those who listened to him.’ This is a remarkable confession.

One day a meeting was held there at which Calvin and his friends consulted about what France needed most. The answer was easy: the Gospel. But France, alas! rejected it. They did not confine themselves to this topic, and Calvin was anxious to substitute in the church the spirit for the form, life and reality for ritual observances. He acquitted himself worthily of his task, and taking up the principal point explained specially his spiritual doctrine on the Saviour’s presence. ‘This,’ says the catholic historian, ‘was the first Calvinist council held in France.’\* The word ‘council’ is too ambitious, but it was a meeting that bore fruit. The living faith which inspired the young doctor gained over a few rebellious spirits. De la Place, who raised numerous objections at first, but

\* ‘In horto illo primum calvinisticum celebratum fuit concilium in Gallia.’—Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Hérés.* ii. p. 252.

who was a man of common sense and 'good conscience,' thought that he might possibly be mistaken. 'The seed fallen into his heart began to grow, and it put forth fruit in the season God had ordained.'\*

The agitation which Calvin excited in Poitiers, the admiration of some, the uneasiness of others, grew stronger every day. The friends of the Gospel began to run some risk by meeting together. If certain fanatics should make themselves masters of the populace, the garden of the Basses-Treilles might be attacked, and the police, under colour of restoring order, might even go so far as to arrest the stranger. There were often false alarms. Calvin's friends determined to look for some solitary place where they might assemble in peace. One of them having pointed out a *wilderness* in the adjacent country—a number of deep and isolated caverns which would shelter them from all investigations,—they determined to go thither in little bands, and by different roads.

The next day the project was put in execution. Calvin set out with two or three others; they traversed the pretty suburb of St. Benedict, took a picturesque footpath, and after about an hour's walking, arrived at a wild-looking spot in front of the ruins of a Roman aqueduct. Beneath them flowed the tranquil waters of the Clain: thickly wooded rocks, containing caverns of various depths, raised their imposing masses above the stream. Calvin was charmed with the solitude. Gradually others arrived, and the assembly was soon complete. Calvin and his friends entered one of the largest of

\* De Farnace, *Vie de la Place*, p. 11.

these caves. They were usually known as the caves of St. Benedict or the Croutelles, but this one was called, and has ever since borne the name of Calvin's grotto.\*

The reformer took his stand on the highest ground; his disciples gathered round him, some of them leaning against the rock; † and in the midst of a solemn silence he began to teach them, expounding what was grandest of all—preaching Christ to them. This was a topic to which he was constantly reverting. 'Better be deprived of everything and possess Christ,' he said one day. 'If the ship is in danger, the sailors throw everything overboard, that they may reach the port in safety. Do likewise. Riches, honours, rank, outward respect—all should be sacrificed to possess Christ. He is our only blessedness.' Calvin spoke with much authority; ‡ he carried away his readers, and was himself carried away. On a sudden feeling his spiritual weakness, and the need they all had of the Holy Ghost, he fell on his knees beneath those solitary vaults; all the assembly knelt with him, and he raised to the throne of God a prayer so touching and so earnest, that all who heard him fancied themselves transported to heaven.§

These pilgrimages to St. Benedict's caves were

\* La grotte de Calvin. See Crottet, *Chronique protestante*, p. 105; and A. Lièvre, *Hist. du Protestantisme du Poitou*, i. p. 23.

† 'In locis secretis frequenter convenerunt.'—Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Hérés.* ii. p. 253. Rémond declares that he had spared no pains to trace out all Calvin's career in France. 'In conquirendis variis quæ eo pertinent documentis, nulli labori peperci.' This has not prevented him from occasionally seasoning his narrative with abuse and calumny.

‡ Flor. Rémond, *ibid.* vii. cap. xi.

§ 'Precem magna vehementia et devotione.'—*Ibid.* ii. p. 252.



soon observed; ill-disposed persons might follow the little groups on their way to the meeting, and surprise the assembly. Calvin's friends resolved to change their place of meeting frequently, sometimes going to a village, at others to an isolated country-house.\* The inhabitants of the neighbourhood would join the little flock, and the preacher would bring forward that christian truth which enlightens the world and man. When they separated, he gave books to every one, 'and even prayers written with his own hand.'

Calvin's opposition to the mass gave greater offence every day; the catholics charged him with the crime of daring to deny that the priest offered Christ himself in sacrifice, as an expiatory victim for the sins of the people. He was moved by these observations, but not shaken. One day when he and his friends were assembled in the cavern, he extolled the sacrifice of the cross offered *once*, according to Scripture, and then spoke so forcibly against the mass, that it was not possible, said earnest catholics, to hear him without shuddering. It is true that Calvin did not spare this Romish ceremony. He sometimes called it a 'mere monkey-trick and burlesque.' 'I call it a monkey-trick,' he said, 'because they mock the supper of the Lord, just as a monkey imitates clumsily whatever he sees others do.† I call it a burlesque, because the nonsense and gestures they introduce are better adapted to a stage-play than to

\* 'Per pagos etiam et villas.' — Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Hérés.* ii. p. 253.

† 'Quod sicut simiæ hominum opera perperam, ita hi sacram cœnam imitantur.'—Calvini *Opusc. lat.* p. 123.



so holy a mystery.’\* There were in the cave some who believed sincerely in transubstantiation, and who habitually attended mass with pious sentiments. Calvin’s words—although they may not have been literally those we have copied—wounded and vexed them, and Le Sage, abruptly interrupting him, exclaimed: ‘Our Lord, very God and very man, is really and substantially under the appearance of the bread and the wine. . . In all ages, wherever men have known Christ, the sacrifice of the mass has been offered up.’ Surprised at this bold outbreak, Calvin asked himself if he had committed a crime in setting the Word of God above the traditions of Rome. He kept silence for a few moments, and then lifting his hand and putting it on the Bible that lay open before him, he exclaimed earnestly: ‘This is my mass!’† Then uncovering his head and placing his fur cap on the table, he lifted his eyes to heaven, and said with emotion: ‘O Lord, if in the day of judgment Thou desirest to punish me because I have deserted the mass, I will say to Thee: O God, Thou hast not commanded me to celebrate it. Behold Thy Law . . . Behold Thy Holy Scripture.‡ . . . Thou didst give it us to be our guide, and I can find no other sacrifice in it than that which was accomplished on the altar of the cross.’ The hearers separated in great excitement, touched with the reformer’s faith at once so simple and so strong, and it was with new

\* ‘Histrionicam actionem appello quod ineptiæ gestusque histrionici illic visuntur.’—Calvini *Opusc. lat.* p. 123.

† ‘Monstrato Bibliorum codice, dixisse: Hæc est missa mea.’—Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Hérés.* ii. p. 261.

‡ ‘Ecce enim hic legem tuam.’—*Ibid.*

convictions that some of them retraced the solitary paths that conducted them to Poitiers.

From that time many persons manifested a desire to receive the Supper according to the Lord's institution. The various ceremonies, the incense, the choral chants satisfied them no longer; they wished to have a simple and real communion with the Saviour. A day was therefore appointed, and they assembled in one of the caves of St. Benedict.\* The minister read the Word of God, and called upon the Lord to pour out His Spirit on the little flock. He broke the bread and handed round the cup; and then invited the worshippers to communicate mutually such reflections and experiences as might be useful to the faith.† These simple exhortations after the Supper were continued for some time in the reformed Church.

\* 'In locis illis secretis prima calvinistica cœna celebrata fuit.'—Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Hérés.* ii. p. 253.

† 'Non ipse solum explicabat, sed aliorum sententias requirebat.' — Ibid.

## CHAPTER VI.

CALVIN AND HIS DISCIPLES BEGIN THE EVANGELISATION  
OF FRANCE.

(SPRING 1534.)

IT was necessary to begin the conversion of France on a larger scale. Might not that country, whose agitations have often disturbed Europe, and which never trembles but all around it is shaken—become, if it received the Gospel, a centre of light and a powerful means of strengthening the nations in justice and peace? That would no doubt have happened, had it become protestant. Calvin, by labouring thirty years for Geneva and France, laboured for the whole Christian world. He made the first experiment at Poitiers, and (if we may use the word) began that glorious evangelising campaign, which he was to direct until the close of his life.

Not content with evangelising the city, the young and zealous doctor visited the castles, abbeys, and villages of the neighbourhood. In the castle of Couhé, a few leagues south of Poitiers, there lived a patriarchal family of great influence in Upper Poitou: it was that of Guichard de St. George, baron of Couhé, and Anne de Mortemer his wife. At their death they left four sons, who had early learned to keep God's commandments. Ponthus, abbot of a Benedictine

convent, was the best known of the four brothers: 'He is a liberal and munificent man,' people said, 'a patron of learning and learned men, whom he welcomes heartily.' \*

A rumour of the meetings held at Poitiers reached Ponthus; being intimate with some of Calvin's disciples and occasionally receiving them at his table, he begged them to bring the young doctor, and from that day Calvin became one of his guests, according to a tradition preserved in the province.† Although the conversations he had with the abbot did not convert him, they made him take pleasure in the Gospel, and he soon asked himself why this astonishing young man should not preach in the Benedictine church? To address a learned and religious community pleased the young doctor's mind. The abbot announced to his monks that a Picard, brought up in the university of Paris and the holder of a benefice at Noyon, would preach in the abbey-church. Accordingly Calvin went into the pulpit and declared that whosoever had a firm and lively faith in the grace of Christ was saved. Some of his hearers were startled at a doctrine which made the Romish priesthood of no use. 'What a perverse doctrine!' they said; 'why does the abbot allow this Picard to preach it in his church?' ‡

On the other hand the Abbot St. George was delighted with the young man's sermons, but hesitated to take the decisive step. The Benedictine abbeys were independent, powerful, and rich; the monks

\* Théodore de Bèze, *Hist. des Eglises réf.* i. p. 63.

† Lièvre, *Hist. des Protestants du Poitou*, i. p. 38.

‡ 'Ille Calvino in ecclesiæ navi suæ perversa dogmata prædicare permisit.'—*Gallia christiana* in loco. See also Lièvre, p. 38.



generally belonged to noble families, and surpassed the other religious orders in intelligence, morality, and extensive familiarity with classical and christian learning. Ponthus felt a difficulty in leaving the quiet life he led in his abbey, or in sacrificing his rich benefice, and exposing himself to the vengeance of the laws. . . He entertained the idea of reconciling the Church with the world, according to the system patronised by Margaret of Navarre. He would remain an abbot, but he would be a christian abbot like Roussel, and although wearing his friar's dress in the pulpit, he would preach the Gospel from it. Ponthus made the experiment, and his sermons caused a great deal of talk. The astonished hearers exclaimed: 'Why the abbot of Valence (it was the name of his monastery) is preaching the rudiments of heresy.'\* Guichard, St. George's third brother, abbot *in commendam* of Bonneveau, ere long shared the convictions of Ponthus, and professed them like him, but without giving up his benefice. The murmuring grew louder throughout the district. 'Look,' said the catholics, 'the men who are caught in Calvin's web still cling to their cloisters and do not forsake the altars. The abbots stick to their flesh-pot (*marmite*), and dress themselves in catholic robes although they are secret Lutherans. They discharge their functions without showing what they are.'†

Ponthus felt ill at ease, his honest soul did not long permit him to halt on both sides. He sacrificed a brilliant position, dismissed his monks, set some to study and others to learn trades; and then, feeling convinced as Luther did, that a forced celibacy is a

\* Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Hérés.* vii. p. 919.

† Ibid.



disorder invented by men, and that marriage is the order of God, he took a wife. The abbot of Valence (says an historian) was the first abbot in France who lifted the mask and showed himself an open Lutheran. His brothers followed the example he had set them. The Sieur de l'Orillonière, son of the eldest (the baron of Couhé) was the first of the family to give his blood for the protestant cause. Thus did the four brothers, full of zeal for the Reformation, prepare for themselves and for their children a life of suffering, combat, and exile, but also of faith, hope, and peace.\*

When Calvin saw this movement of life going on around him, he thought of France. Would she remain behind Germany and Switzerland? . . . No. France will awake . . . she is already waking; ere long she will receive the Gospel in its holy purity, and will increase in morality, in light, and in liberty: such were his hopes. But for their realisation, men were needed who, being regenerate themselves, should be fellow-workers with God in this new creation. Calvin asked himself whether some of the converts of Poitiers were not called to this work? Alas! what a small company for so large a kingdom! How great the weakness of the Gospel compared with the magnificence of Rome! 'God acts thus,' he said, 'in order to strip us of all pride. And therefore he chooses the weak ones of

\* This family has reckoned, even to our own days, men decided for the Gospel. The interview of Armand-Louis de St. George, Count of Marsay, with Voltaire, in his château of Changins, near Geneva, is well known. Appointed British resident in that city in 1717, he acquired the rights of citizenship (*France Protestante*, under *Saint George*). The present head of the family, Count Alexander de St. George, for many years president of the Evangelical Society of Geneva, took an active part in the liberation of the Madias and in other christian works.

this world to confound the strong. If the iron grows red in the fire,' he added, 'it is that it may be forged.'\* He wished to forge it and to make serviceable instruments out of it. One day being at the usual meeting, he said: 'Is there any one here willing to go and give light to those whom the pope has blinded?'† Jean Vernou, Philip Véron, and Albert Babinot stood forward. Calvin had not forgotten the Angoumois where he possessed beloved friends; thither and into the adjacent provinces he will first send his missionaries and commence the evangelisation of France: 'You, Babinot, will go into Guyenne and Languedoc,' he said; 'Philip Véron, you will go into Saintonge and Angoumois; and you, Jean Vernou, will stay at Poitiers and the neighbourhood.' Calvin and the other brethren did not think that these missionaries required regular theological studies; had they not received the necessary gifts from God, 'neither more nor less than if He had given them with His own hand?'‡ But they had need to be recommended to the almighty grace of God. They therefore prayed together, and Calvin called upon the Lord to accept the services of these pious men. He told them to go and proclaim the Gospel, not in the name of any man, but in the name of the Lord, and because God commanded it. A collection provided for the expenses of this mission, and the evangelists departed.

Babinot having reached the banks of the Garonne and entered Toulouse, resolved to address in the first

\* 'Calvinus interim, ferrum sibi in igne esse intelligens.' — Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Hérés.* ii. p. 253.

† 'Ut miseris papistis oculos aperiendi provinciam susceperint.' — Ibid.

‡ Calvin, *Harmonie évangélique*.

place the young noblemen who were studying there. A learned man (he had lectured at Poitiers on the *Institutes* of Justinian), he was firm, upright, zealous in the faith, and at the same time very gentle, so that he was called *the Goodfellow* (Bonhomme). Many students were brought to the light by him. He next began to visit several little flocks in the neighbourhood, and celebrated the Lord's Supper with them after the manner which the man of God (as he called Calvin) had taught him.\* 'He went through the country, praying secretly here and there in humble conventicles.' A regent or schoolmaster of Agen, named Sarrasin, having permitted him to speak in his school, was himself converted to the Gospel, and immediately began to teach the Word of God, but not so as to attract observation.

Véron, who was as remarkable for his activity as Babinot for his gentleness, carried also into every place the news of the truth: he spent more than twenty years in this occupation.† He walked on foot through Poitou, Anjou, Angoumois, Saintonge, and even Guyenne. 'I desire,' he said, 'to gather up the stray sheep of the Lord.' Wherever he went, he invited souls to come to the good shepherd, *who giveth his life for the sheep*; and those who could distinguish the voice of the shepherd from that of the wolf, and see the difference between the call of God and the inventions of men, answered and entered into the fold. And hence he was called the Gatherer (*ramasseur*). 'Of a truth,' said Cayer the priest, 'this Gatherer

\* 'Manducationem quæ a viro illo Dei tradita erat celebrabat.'—Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Hérés.* ii. p. 252.

† Ibid. lib. vii. cap. xii.

marches out and does not leave a corner of our province, where he does not go sounding his way, to try and make some prize.’\* On arriving in any town or village, he inquired for the best disposed persons, entered their houses, and sought to instruct them in the truth. He had taken with him some of Calvin’s manuscripts, and when he desired to strengthen his hearers’ souls, he would take them out of his pocket-book, and show them, saying that they were the writings of a great man; and then, after reading a few extracts, he would return them carefully to their place. ‘The *gatherer*,’ said fervent Roman-catholics, ‘shows these papers as a great curiosity, as if they were Sibylline verses.’†

These evangelists especially addressed the young. Calvin would not have religious instruction neglected, or subordinated to secular instruction: it should have its separate place. He believed that all culture, but especially religious teaching, ought to begin with early youth; that the soul then possesses a power of receiving and appropriating what is set before it, that it never will have again; and that if the seeds of a religious life are not sown and do not germinate in the heart of the child, the man will perish wholly. He had said to the three evangelists: ‘Let your first attention be always to the professors and school-masters.’‡ The zealous catholics observed this method. ‘See!’ they said, ‘as youth is easily led astray, they hide the *minister* under the cloak of the *magister* (master).’§ Calvin’s friends thus instilled their doctrines into the schools of Guyenne. Sarrasin converted

\* Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Hérés.* vii. cap. xii.

† Ibid. cap. xi.

‡ Ibid.

§ Ibid.



another schoolmaster named Vendocin, who became so firm a Christian, that he preferred to be burnt over a slow fire to abjuring Calvinism.\*

The men who devoutly adhered to the formulas of Rome were grieved when they saw the young so readily receiving the evangelical doctrine. At Bordeaux and Toulouse, at Angoulême and Aden, in the cloisters, in the law-courts, and even in the market-places, the loudest complaints were made. ‘These *Mercuries* (the name they gave to Calvin’s missionaries) are doing much mischief in the schools,’ they said. ‘As soon as the captains of the young (i. e. the masters) are conquered, the little soldiers march under their colours. The *young* heads of *young* folks are more easily disturbed by the heretic *aconite* than the old. They rush into danger, without examining it; and they are lost before they are aware of it. They embrace these new doctrines with such courage that many, who have only down on their chins, expose themselves to voluntary death, and thus lose both soul and body.’†

While Babinot and Véron were traversing the south, John Vernou held firm at Poitiers, and aroused the students. The Reformation is fond of learning: it looks upon science as the friend of religion. Faith, it says, does not require of Christians to know only what is learnt by faith, or not to know scientifically what they ought to learn. It desires that we should know, and know well. But on the other hand, it believes that true science cannot require of the adept to despise the truths that faith reveals. It is essential

\* Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Hérés.* lib. vii. cap. xi.

† Ibid. cap. xi.



to the progress of humanity that there should always be a good understanding between faith and science. And accordingly the Reformation calls upon them to be united. Unhappily, disagreement is possible and even easy. The philosopher and the christian fall with great facility into a lamentable onesidedness, which makes the former despise religion, and the latter science. In order that faith and science should seek each other and unite, the moral element should prevail in those who are engaged with both. If it is weakened, religion easily produces fanatics, and science unbelievers : a moral torpor, the sleep of conscience is in every age the great and only explanation of these two lamentable errors. As soon as the conscience is awakened, as soon as that holy light is kindled in man, there is no longer any fanaticism or incredulity. Such were Calvin's thoughts. His disciple Vernou endeavoured like himself to unite faith with science in the university of Poitiers, and scattered among the youth who frequented it (as history tells us) the seeds of Christian doctrine.

Calvin's three missionaries, Babinot, Véron, and Vernou, were soon famous throughout the west of France, and the wrath of the clergy of all ranks, and even of laymen of note, knew no bounds. The college professors hunted in their Homers for terms of abuse to heap on these heralds of God's word. 'These three worthy apostles,' they said, 'are the agents of the decrees of the arch-heretic Calvin and the firebrands of France. . . Look at them . . . these are the men that want to reform the world. . . Wretched Thersites, miserable Irus, Ithacan beggars . . . who set themselves up as the equals of Ajax and Achilles. . . They

were born yesterday, like gourds, and yet they trace their genealogy, as if they were descended from the apostles!' Ulysses, as we know, killed the beggar Irus with a blow of his fist. These disdainful and bitter critics remembered this, and hoped that the kings of France would give a death-blow to the Reformation. They dealt the blow, but protestantism was not slain.

When Calvin was subsequently settled at Geneva, Babinot, Véron, and Vernou paid him a visit. They were delighted to find the Christian professor surrounded with respect, and were never tired of listening to him from whose lips they had heard at Poitiers the first words of life. They did not, however, stay with him. Babinot and Véron returned to the west of France to continue to propagate the Gospel there, which they did until their death. As for Vernou, he was seized while crossing the mountains of Savoy, and was burnt alive at Chambery, confessing Jesus Christ his Saviour.\* Let us return to Poitiers.

The prior of Trois-Moutiers, with whom Calvin was staying, was one of those who, though fond of learning and the Gospel, did not wish to break with the Church. The conversations at the Basses-Treilles, the 'manducations' in the caves of St. Benedict, the evangelisation of the city and country . . . all made him uneasy. He was alarmed at the thought that the officers might knock at his door some day, and that the *heretic* would be taken in his house. He therefore advised Calvin to continue his journey. The reformer had ended his task; he was now to

\* Crespin, *Martyrol*. A. Lièvre, *Hist. des Protest. du Poitou*.

turn his steps elsewhere; he bade his friends farewell. As he left them, he could say like his Master: *What will I, if the fire be already kindled?* Calvin established the date of the Reformation at Poitiers, when, writing at a later period to the Church which assembled in that city, he said: 'Do not go astray from the doctrine which you have received *in part from us*, since it has pleased God to make use of *our labour* for your salvation.'\* Although removed, he still continued to be the director of that Church. 'I know full well that you are *spied* (guêtés) by the enemy,' he wrote to them; 'but let not the fear of persecution hinder you from seeking the pastures of life . . . There is a middle line between temerity and timidity . . . Remain tranquilly (*coyement*) in your hiding-place; but beware, my brethren, that you do not shut the door against those who desire to come to the kingdom of God.'†

One thought absorbed him at the time he left Poitiers. It was the month of April 1534; on the 10th of July he would be twenty-five years old. A regulation of the Church, confirmed by the Council of Trent, fixed this as the age at which those who have received the tonsure were promoted to the priesthood. In early youth he had received the tonsure, that symbol of sacerdotal royalty, borrowed (St. Jerome tells us) from the pagan priests of Isis and Serapis;‡ and his age now summoned him to enter holy orders.

\* Calvin à l'Eglise de Poitiers, *Lettres Françaises*, tom. ii. p. 12. See also Lièvre, *Hist. des Prot. du Poitou*, tom. i. p. 33.

† Calvin aux fidèles de Poitiers, *Lettres Françaises*, i. p. 433.

‡ 'Rasis capitibus sicut sacerdotis Isidis atque Serapidis.'—Hieron. xiii. in *Ezech.* cap. xliv.

He did not want for friends who advised him to remain in the Church for its reformation; the chapel of Gesine at Noyon, and the cure of Pont l'Evêque awaited him, and many other doors would open before him. He was invited to come and put himself in due order. But Calvin shrank in alarm from the idea of enrolling himself among the pope's soldiers. 'If I make myself the pope's vassal,' he said, 'how can I conscientiously fight against the papists? . . . The sovereign majesty of God would be offended! . . . I would sooner give up not only one benefice, but a hundred, even of the most brilliant.\* O cursed wealth of the Church! There is not a single penny of it that is not defiled with cheating, sacrilege, and robbery!' There was no ecclesiastical dignity to which a mind so preeminently administrative might not aspire. But Calvin was convinced that to save the Church it was necessary to sacrifice Rome. Two paths lay before him: one broad and easy, the other narrow and difficult: his choice was not doubtful. 'The Gospel,' he said, 'is more than all the riches, honour, and ease of this world . . . I am ready to give up everything that withdraws me from it.'

Calvin left Poitiers, accompanied by his faithful Du Tillet, who for two years scarcely ever quitted him. The young canon was one of those honest but weak natures who have absolute need of a support, and who not knowing how to find it in the word of God, seek it in strong men. He therefore attached himself to the young reformer, as the vine to the elm. Alas!

\* 'Optimis et splendidis sacerdotiis, se protinus abdicat.' — Calvini *Opusc. lat.* p. 90.



the day was to come, when terrified by persecution, and unable to make up his mind to break with the Church, he would cling to the papacy and take that for his support.

A surprising transformation had been effected in Poitiers, and Calvin left behind him many regrets and tears. 'Oh! would to God that we had many Calvins!' wrote Charles de Ste. Marthe, one of the professors of the university. 'I am distressed that you have been taken from us; I envy the country where you are, and my only consolation is that our university is now filled with pious and learned men. Pray to God that, by the Spirit of Christ, we may worthily proclaim the Gospel, in the midst of our enemies and even in the midst of the flames.'\*

Calvin passed through Orleans, went on to Paris, and then proceeded to Noyon, where he arrived at the beginning of May. He immediately informed his relations and the bishop that he had come to resign his benefices. We may imagine the astonishment of his friends. What! let slip the opportunity of doing so much good in the Church! Renounce important offices to join an obscure sect! It seemed the act of a madman; but nothing could bend his unshakeable resolution.

On Monday, May 4, 1534, in the presence of the grand vicar of Monseigneur the bishop and count of Noyon, of his chancellor, and of the notary of the chapter, Calvin resigned the chapel of Gesine in favour of Master Anthony de la Marlière, and his cure

\* Lettre de Ste Marthe à Calvin, found by Jules Bonnet in the library at Gotha (MSS. no. 404).



in favour of another ecclesiastic of Noyon. It would even appear that he sold his patrimonial property at the same time.\*

Having broken the last ties that bound him to the Roman Church, Calvin began to speak with greater freedom to those around him of the Gospel.

He had found in his father's house two brothers and a sister, Anthony, Charles, and Mary: these were the first persons he invited to Christ, in affectionate and pious conversations. He then turned to some members of the episcopal clergy and other inhabitants of Noyon. He put his hand (to use his own expression) on those who were running elsewhere, 'to stop them short.' Anthony and Mary were the first to answer to him. Charles resisted longer; he received however at that time a seed in his heart which germinated afterwards.

A canon, named Henry de Collemont, some other clergymen, and a few of the citizens, appear to have lent an ear to the pious and eloquent words of their young fellow-citizen. However, he was anxious to return to the capital, and about the end of May he was in Paris, where fresh struggles awaited him.

\* Desmay, *Vie de Calvin hérésiarque*, pp. 48, 49. Levasseur, *Annales de Noyon*, pp. 1161, 1168. Drelinecourt, p. 171. We possess a deed by which Calvin sells to one of the king's mounted sergeants his field of the Tuilerie for the sum of 10 livres tournois.

## CHAPTER VII.

THE EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANS OF PARIS IN 1534.

(SUMMER 1534.)

CALVIN found Paris very different from what he had left it, when he had quitted it in such great haste eight months before. The times seemed favourable to the Gospel. The King of England, although remaining catholic at heart, had resolved to emancipate himself from the dominion of Rome: this event had created a great sensation throughout Europe, and men asked whether Francis I. would not imitate 'his good brother.' He did not seem far from it. At that time he was uniting with the protestant princes of Germany, he was restoring one of them to his states, and laying before the French clergy articles of faith drawn up by the author of the *Confession of Augsburg*. Calvin knew of these strange acts of the monarch, and it was partly this which had induced him to return to Paris. Francis I. was not the only person in France who felt new aspirations. There was in all classes a leaning towards a reformation. The learned called for liberty of thought, and desired to see the reign of the monks come to an end. Certain statesmen wished to deliver France from the enslaving influence of Rome, even while maintaining its catholicity. William du Bellay, the king's most

active minister, called Bucer the reformer, ‘an excellent professor of the best theology;’\* and wrote to him: ‘Everything bids us be hopeful: the king’s taste for a better learning (that is, for the Holy Scriptures) increases day by day.’† Bucer himself, who was full of hope, communicated it to his friends: ‘The pope’s reign is falling very low in France,’ he wrote, ‘and many people long for Jesus Christ.’‡ The clergy became uneasy, and a Franciscan friar complained that ‘the heresy of Luther having entered France, had already covered so much ground, as almost to call itself her mistress, even in Paris.’§ Noblemen and men of letters, citizens, students, and many of the lower classes hailed the Reformation as the commencement of a new day. ‘All who have any sense,’ it was said, ‘whatever be their age or sex, when they hear the truth preached, forsake bigotry.’

Such were the circumstances under which Calvin came to reside in Paris at the house of his friend La Forge, at the sign of the *Pelican*, in the Rue St. Martin. The pious tradesman and his wife received him with the most cordial hospitality, and fearing lest he should again expose a life so precious to the Church, they conjured him not to trust too much to what was said about the king’s disposition, and to

\* ‘Melioris theologiæ professor eximius.’—Strasburg MS. (June 20, 1534).

† ‘Etiam rex ipse, cujus animus erga meliores litteras in dies magis ac magis augetur.’—Ibid.

‡ ‘Pulchre inclinabat regnum Papæ in Gallia. Ad Christum multi adspirabant.’—Ibid.

§ ‘S’y était fait place déjà fort large, jusqu’à presque se dire maîtresse, même de Paris.’—Fontaine, *Hist. cath. de notre Temps*, (Paris) p. 188.

beware of teaching in public, if he would not risk his life.\* The flame of persecution which appeared extinct, might break out again at any moment.

One martyrdom, of which he was told all the particulars, was well calculated to enforce these rules of prudence. Calvin did not find in Paris that strong and decided christian, Pointet the surgeon, whom he had often seen at the meetings.† The monks, whom this bold man had reprimanded so soundly for their immoralities, had raised a clamour against him; Leclerc, the priest of St. André-des-Arts, had prosecuted him; he had been imprisoned in the Conciergerie and condemned to be burnt after being strangled. This was paying very dearly for the lessons of morality he had given the friars. Before the hour of execution, the gaoler had taken him into the prison chapel, and left him there with a monk before an image. The confessor began to exhort him: ‘Kneel down before that image and ask pardon for your sins.’ Seeing that his penitent remained motionless, he seized him by the neck to force him upon his knees. But Pointet, who was naturally of a ‘violent temper,’ thrust the monk back roughly, saying: ‘Satan, begone, and do not tempt me to turn idolater.’ The confused and exasperated confessor ran hastily out of the chapel, and going to the criminal chamber told the president and his two assessors what had passed, and begged them to come and bring the man to reason. ‘He is a madman, he is out of his senses,’ exclaimed the magistrates, as they accompanied the confessor. These three

\* ‘Magnum vitæ periculum.’—Beza, *Vita Calvini*.

† See Vol. II. of this History, bk. ii. chap. xxxii.



individuals, who had just condemned Pointet to be strangled, having repeated the invitation which the monk had given him, the prisoner, who was annoyed by this persecution, treated them as he had treated the monk; he called them 'bloodthirsty wretches, murderers, robbers, who unjustly and against all reason put to death the children of God!' The three judges, excited and terrified in their turn, hurried back to the court, and there, heated by passion, they increased the severity of the sentence, adding that Pointet should have his tongue cut out before anything else was done to him. Had not that tongue called them murderers? It was hoped that he would now show himself more tractable, but they were mistaken. The steadfast christian could not speak, but he refused to make the least sign of recantation, and to bend his head before an image. The enemies of truth (as the chronicle styles them) seeing this, had recourse to a fresh aggravation of the sentence: they condemned him to be burnt alive, 'which was done as cruelly as they could devise.' This death produced a deep impression on the minds of the evangelical christians of Paris.\*

Calvin, yielding to the representations of his friends, resolved to substitute 'private admonitions' for preaching at the assemblies, and began by visiting the humble christians whom he had heard spoken of at La Forge's.

In the street which lay between the two gates of the law courts, there was a shoemaker's shop. On entering it, no one was seen but a poor hunchback,

\* Crespin, *Martyrol.* fol. 107 verso.



crippled in all his limbs, except the tongue and the arms. This paralytic creature was the shoemaker's son, and by name Bartholomew. 'Alas!' said his father, Robert Milton, to those who expressed their compassion at the sight, 'he was not always so; he was quite another person in his youth, endowed with excellent gifts both of body and mind.'\* In fact, Bartholomew was once the handsomest man of the parish, very clever, and full of liveliness and imagination. He had abused these gifts; he had followed his impassioned disposition, and had launched into life, indulging in all the lusts of youth, in foolish amours and other kinds of irregularities with which young folks willingly defile themselves. Continually carried away by his impetuous temper, he equally courted pleasures and quarrels, he rushed into the midst of the strife as soon as any discussion arose, and displayed unparalleled temerity in all his disputes. He got up balls and concerts, despised the things of God, turned the priests into ridicule, and laughed at pious men. Everybody in the quarter talked about Berthelot (as he was called) and of his exploits; some with admiration, others with fear. All the young men looked up to him as their leader.

One day, while giddily indulging in his ordinary diversions, he met with a fall and broke his ribs. As he would not apply any remedy, the mischief grew worse; the various parts of his body 'died little by little,' and he was entirely paralysed. What a change in his life! Poor Bartholomew, who had been so proud of his beauty, now weak, broken-

\* Crespin, *Martyrol.* fol. 112 verso.

down, deprived of the use of his limbs, unable any more to associate with his friends, was obliged to keep in his father's shop all day long. He was deeply distressed, not only by the severe pains he suffered, but more by the sight of his deformity. Sitting near the window, he had no other amusement than to watch the passers-by, and his temper being still the same, or rather soured by his misfortunes, he was not sparing of his sarcasms. One day, seeing one of the evangelicals passing before the shop, he began to insult him, and 'to scoff at the terrible majesty of God.'—'Holloa! Lutheran!' he called out, adding all sorts of taunts. The christian stopped; he was touched when he saw the pitiful condition of the wretched individual who insulted him, and going up to him, said affectionately: 'Poor man, why do you mock at the passers-by? Do you not see that God has *bent your body in this way in order to straighten your soul?*'\* These simple words struck Milon: he had never thought that his *soul* was *bent* as well as his body. 'Can it be true,' he asked, 'that God has made these misfortunes fall upon me, in order to reform his misguided creature?' He lent an ear to the Lutheran, who spoke with him, and gave him a New Testament, saying: 'Look at this book, and a few days hence you will tell me what you think of it.' Milon took the Gospel, opened it, and having begun, says the chronicler, 'to taste the fruit of this reading, he continued at it night and day.' This little volume was enough for him: he had no need of any teacher. The sword of the Word of God pierced to the bottom of his heart, and his past life terrified

\* Crespin, *Martyrol.* fol. 113.

him. But the gospel consoled him: 'It was to him like a loud trumpet sounding the praise of the grace of Christ.' Milon found the Saviour: 'Mercy has been shown me,' he said, 'in order that the love of God which pardons the greatest sinners, should be placed as on a hill, and be seen by all the world.' He had now a curb that restrained him, and prevented him from 'indulging in abuse, quarrels, bickerings, squabbles and contentions.' The wolf had become a lamb. Bartholomew imparted the riches he had found in the book of God to his father, to the other members of his family, and to all the customers who visited the shoemaker's shop. There was not a room in Paris that offered a spectacle at once so interesting and so varied.

Bartholomew's christian charity became as inexhaustible as his worldly skill had once been fertile in inventing amusements. He devoted entirely to God the restless activity which he had lavished on the world. At certain hours of the day, the poor young man, 'unequalled in the art of writing,' would collect the children of the neighbourhood round his bed and dictate to them a few words of the Bible, teaching them how to form their letters properly. At other times he thought of the necessities of the poor, and laboured diligently with his own hands: 'etching with aquafortis on knives, daggers, and sword-blades,' he executed many unusual things for the goldsmiths. He spent the proceeds of his labour in supporting several needy persons who possessed a knowledge of the Gospel. He had also a fine voice, and played on several instruments 'with singular grace;' accordingly, every morning and evening he consecrated to the praise of the Lord those gifts which

he had formerly dedicated to pleasure, accompanying himself as he sang psalms and spiritual songs. People came from all quarters to this shop, which was situated in the centre of Paris: some came 'by reason of the excellent and rare things he did;' others 'visited him to hear his singing.' A large number were attracted by the great and sudden change that had taken place in him. 'If God has bestowed these gifts on me,' said the poor paralytic, 'it is to the end that His glory should be magnified in me.' He meekly taught the humble to receive the Gospel, and if any hypocrites presented themselves, 'he took them aside, and launched on them the thunderbolts of God.' 'In short,' adds the chronicler, 'his room was a true school of piety, day and night, re-echoing with the glory of the Lord.'

At some distance from this spot, but near De la Forge's, at the entrance of the Rue St. Denis, at the corner of the boulevard, was a large draper's shop, the *Black Horse*, belonging to John du Bourg. This tradesman was a man of independent character, who liked to see, to understand, and to judge for himself: he had never frequented the schools or even had much conversation with the evangelicals, but for all that, says the chronicle, he had not been denied the wisdom from heaven. By means of the Holy Scriptures, which he read constantly, and in which he humbly sought the truth, he had received from God the knowledge of those 'glad tidings which (as it was said) the wise cannot obtain by their own wisdom.' Forthwith he had begun to spread it around him with an unwearying activity, which astonished his neighbours. 'That ardour, which makes a great show at



the beginning,' said some of his relatives, 'will soon end in smoke, like a fire of tow as the proverb says.' They were mistaken; the Word had sunk into his heart, and taken such deep root there, that it could not be plucked out. The priests had intrigued, kinsfolk had clamoured, and customers had deserted him, but 'neither money nor kindred could ever turn him aside from the truth.'\*

While his old friends were growing distant, new ones were drawing near him. A receiver of Nantes, Peter Valeton by name, was often seen entering his shop. Like Du Bourg, he was 'a man of sense and credit,' but while the tradesman had been instructed in solitude by the Holy Ghost, the receiver had come to a knowledge of the Gospel 'by means of some good people with whom he associated,'† and then the study of the New Testament had confirmed his faith. He did not stop here. Being in easy circumstances, and fond of books, he bought all the writings of the reformers he could procure. If there was one in any bookseller's back shop, he would catch it up, pay for it instantly, hide it under his cloak, for fear the volume should be seen, and hurry home with it. On reaching his room, he would place it at the bottom of a large chest or trunk, the key of which he always carried with him. Then as soon as he had a spare moment, he would close his door, reopen the chest, take out the precious book, and read it eagerly. He listened if any person was coming, for though he was a faithful soul, he was still weak in the faith, and was afraid of the stake.

All these pious men joyfully welcomed those who

\* Crespin, *Martyrol.* fol. 113 verso.

† Ibid. p. 113.



showed any love for the Gospel. There was sometimes present at their meetings a Picard gentleman, by name John le Comte, belonging to the household of the Amirale de Bonnivet, widow of the celebrated favourite of Francis I. He was born at Etaples in 1500, had attached himself to Lefèvre, his fellow-townsmen, followed him into Briçonnet's service, and only left him to enter Madame de Bonnivet's family, as tutor to her three sons. Constantly attending the meetings of the little Church, he often spoke at them, and every one appreciated his knowledge of Scripture (he could read them in Hebrew), his sound theology, and his talent in expounding the truth. We shall meet with him again in Switzerland.

Another rather singular person attracted the attention of the assembly by his dark complexion, his gloomy look, and mysterious air. He was a celebrated Italian, Giulio Camillo of Forli (in the States of the Church), philosopher, orator, poet, astrologer, philologist, and mythologist, of great skill in the cabalistic science,\* who pretended to hold intercourse with the elementary beings, and had laboured forty years in constructing a machine in the form of a theatre, full of little niches, in which he lodged all our faculties and many other things besides, and by means of which he pretended to teach all the sciences. Francis I. having invited him to Paris, Camillo exhibited to him, and explained, his wonderful machine, at which the king was delighted, and gave him 500 ducats. Although taciturn and dreamy, he courted the society of pious men. Paleario speaks of him in his letters,†

\* Tiraboschi, *Lettere italiane*, vii. p. 315.

† Palearii *Op.* lib. i. ep. xvii.

and he became intimate in Paris with Sturm, who willingly received into his house the learned of all countries. The latter was charmed to see a scholar, invited from Italy by the king, and of whom all the world was talking, inclining towards the Gospel; and one day, writing to Bucer, he said: ‘Camillo professes not only profound science but admirable piety also. . . . God often does something by means of men of this sort; who, when their will is equal to their means, become great patterns.’\* Camillo knocked at the door and came in while Sturm was writing. Sturm showed him the letter, and the Italian wrote at the foot: ‘Would to God that my mind were in my hands, or that it could flow from my pen! . . . If you could see it you would certainly recognise it as your own.’† It would appear that Camillo was deceived. He was a man of original mind, desirous of learning everything new, including the Reformation; but there was some quackery in him. If his famous machine did nothing for the progress of science, it advanced his fortunes, which was a compensation in his eyes. Calvin was less pleased with him than Sturm; the eagle eye of the reformer was not deceived. The Italian’s gloomy air seemed to hide some unbelief or heresy. ‘If spiritual joy reign not in our hearts,’ he said, ‘the kingdom of God is not in us.’‡

Many other well-known persons visited the friends of the Gospel in Paris; among them were Des Fosset, afterwards lieutenant-general of Berry, Jacques

\* ‘Per ejusmodi homines, sæpe Deus aliquid facit, qui quum quantum possunt tantum velint, magno solent esse exemplo.’—Strasburg MS. Schmidt, *G. Roussel*, p. 220.

† ‘Utinam animus esset nunc in manibus atque in calamo.’—*Ibid.*

‡ Calvin, in *I. Epist. ad Thessal.*

Canaye, subsequently a famous advocate before the parliament, besides other lawyers, noblemen, royal servants, tradesmen, and professors. Persecution made them known, and we shall have to name many of them among the exiles and martyrs.\*

Besides these adult laymen, a number of scholars or students was observed at the evangelical meetings. Among them was a boy of Melun, Jacques Amyot by name, 'of very low origin,' says Beza, picked up in the streets of Paris by a lady, who, wishing to turn him to account, made him attend her sons to college and carry their books. Amyot, who was to be one of the most celebrated writers of the age, soon showed a wonderful aptitude for Greek literature; he had even learnt to know something of the Gospel. He was to change hereafter, to take orders, to forget what he had learnt, and even to become 'a very wretched persecutor;'<sup>†</sup> but at this time he was considered to be a friend of the new doctrine.

It was the common people, however, that were most numerous at these conventicles. One of them, Henry Poille, a poor bricklayer from a village near Meaux, told a friend one day 'that he had come to a knowledge of the truth in the school of Meaux, thanks to Bishop Briçonnet. Alas!' he added, 'the bishop has been overcome since then by the enemies of the cross.'

Even the most necessitous persons were active in good works. A poor woman named Catelle had turned school-mistress out of love for children. 'It would be too cruel a thing,' she said, 'to exclude those of tender age from God's grace!'

\* See below, chap. xi.

† Th. de Bèze, *Diet. Eccles.* p. 11. *France protestante*, art. *Amyot*.

But of all these evangelical christians of Paris no one had more zeal than De la Forge. ‘He never spared his goods for the poor,’ says the chronicler.\* He had the Bible printed at his own expense, and along with the alms which he distributed he would always add a kind word, and often a Gospel or some other pious book.

Calvin was not however equally pleased with everything in Paris. He willingly recognised the beauty of the city, but was terrified at seeing fearful abysses and (as he called them) ‘the depths of hell’ side by side with its magnificent palaces. He felt ‘extreme sadness’ at the sight. An immense movement was then being accomplished all over the world. As the sun of spring brings up the seed sown in the earth—the tares as well as the good seed—the sun of liberty that was beginning to shine quickened not only the germs of truth, but sometimes also those of error. Calvin’s soul was deeply grieved at this; but he did not stand still. He had received from God the call to oppose all false doctrines, and was preparing to do so. This is one of the main features of his character. To the very last he combated the pride of those who wish to know everything; the rage for subtleties, mystical pretensions, immorality, unitarian doctrines, the deism which denies the supernatural, and the pantheistic and atheistic theories. In Paris he met with all these aberrations. His principal means of combating error was to put forward the truth; yet he thought it useful sometimes to have conversations and even conferences with his adversaries, of which we shall see some examples.

\* Crespin, *Martyrol.* fol. 113.



## CHAPTER VIII.

CALVIN'S FIRST RELATIONS WITH THE LIBERTINES AND  
SERVETUS.

(SUMMER 1534.)

DE LA FORGE willingly received all pious strangers visiting Paris. One day Calvin saw at his friend's table certain individuals who, he fancied, had something singular about them. His eyes were fixed on them and he tried to make them out. One of them, named Coppin, from Lille, a man of the people and of no education, but with boldness greater than his ignorance, raised his voice, affected a sententious style, and spoke like an oracle. 'Verily,' said Calvin, 'a fool never has any doubts.' A little farther on sat Quintin from Hainault, who seemed to have more education, and certainly more cunning. He assumed airs of superiority, an imposing tone of voice, and expressing himself ambiguously, gave himself the air of a prophet. 'The latter seems to me a big rogue,' said Calvin of him.\* Quintin was usually accompanied by a few disciples, ignorant and fanatical persons who repeated all he said; they were Bertrand des Moulins, Claude Perceval, and others. These bold and adventurous sectarians having nothing and never

\* *Calvin contre les Libertins. Opusc. franç. p. 652; Opusc. lat. p. 510.*



working, looked out wherever they went for some good-natured person who would keep them in their idleness by supplying them with victuals and drink. They crept into the house by meek enticing ways, making no display at first of their particular doctrines, reserving these for the initiated only. They strove to win over all who listened to them, and to that end spoke continually of the Holy Ghost, and tried to make men believe that they were His apostles. Simple souls allowed themselves to be caught. They would have believed they had committed the unpardonable sin, if they had not looked upon these people as saints.

One day when there was a large party at De la Forge's, Quintin began to publish his doctrines. Whatever was the subject of conversation, the *spirit* immediately appeared. Calvin lost all patience: 'You are like those country priests,' he said, 'who, having but one image in their church, make it serve for five or six saints. He is either St. James, or St. Francis, or St. Basil, and the priest receives as many offerings as there are saints.'\* Sometimes, however, these 'spirituals,' as they were called, betrayed themselves, and let their fanatical opinions slip out. 'There are not many spirits,' said Quintin, 'there is only one spirit of God, who is and lives in all creatures. It is this sole spirit which does everything;† man has no will, no more than if he were a stone.'‡

Such language surprised Calvin. He examined

\* *Opusc. franç.* p. 664; *Opusc. lat.* p. 520.

† *Ibid.* p. 666; *ibid.* p. 523. 'Unicum esse spiritum Dei qui sit et vivat in omnibus creaturis.'

‡ 'Nullam homini voluntatem tribuunt, ac si esset lapis.' — *Opusc. lat.* p. 669.

the strange prophets, and discovered several capital errors in them. 'The Holy Spirit is our reason,' said some, 'and that Spirit teaches us that there is neither condemnation nor hell.'—'The soul,' said others, 'is material and mortal.'—'God is everything,' said Quintin, 'and everything is God.' Immoral doctrines were combined with this system. Calvin's conscience was terrified: he had risen up for the purpose of destroying a worm-eaten framework that men had built round the temple of God, and now rash hands were presuming to destroy the temple itself. He wished to destroy the superstitious traditions of so many ages, only to set the Divine truths of the apostolic times in their place; and all of a sudden he found himself face to face with men who desired no other God but nature, and would change the world into a vast wilderness. Calvin did not separate from Rome in order to be less christian, but to be more so. He resolved, therefore, to attack those who under the cloak of Protestantism suppress the mysteries of faith; to combat with the same severity both pope and sectarians, and if he undertook to destroy the fables of men, he would try still more to preserve the revelations of God. Had not Luther cried out when speaking of these would-be spirituals: 'It is the devil who seeks to turn you aside from the truth. . . Turn your backs upon the drivellers!'\* Various circumstances which were then taking place under Calvin's eyes, made him understand more clearly the necessity of opposing these threatening doctrines with the utmost energy.

\* Luth. *Ep.* iii. p. 62.

One day a man had been murdered in the streets of Paris; a great crowd had gathered round his body, and a pious Christian exclaimed: 'Alas! who has committed this crime?' Quintin, who was there also, made answer immediately, in his Picard *patois*: 'Since you want to know, it was *me*!' The other said to him with surprise: 'What! could you be such a coward?' 'It was not me, it was God.' 'What!' exclaimed the man, 'you impute to God a crime which He punishes?' Then the wretched man, 'discharging his poison more copiously,' continued: 'Yes, it's thee, it's me, it's God; for what thee or me does, it is God who does it; and what God does, we do.'\* Another analogous circumstance occurred in the house of Calvin's friend. De la Forge had a servant to whom he paid high wages; this man robbed his master, and ran away with the money. A shoemaker of the neighbourhood, who held Quintin's opinions, having gone to the shop the same day, found the tradesman very uneasy: 'The man who has committed such a base action,' he said, 'might easily take advantage of my credit, and borrow in my name.' Whereupon, as Calvin relates, the shoemaker immediately began to flap his wings, and was up into the clouds, exclaiming: 'It is blaspheming God to call this action base; . . . seeing that God does everything, we ought to reckon nothing bad.' Some days later, this philosopher was himself robbed by a servant. Immediately forgetting all his spiritual knowledge, he rushed out of the house 'like a madman,' to search

\* 'Cest *ty*, c'est *my*, c'est Dieu; car ce que *ty* ou *my* faisons, c'est Dieu qui le fait.'

after the thief, and on reaching De la Forge's, was lavish of his abuse against the culprit. De la Forge ironically repeated to him his own words: 'But you accuse God,' he said, 'since it is He who did it.' The shoemaker sneaked off abashed, 'like a dog with his tail between his legs.'\*

Calvin began the contest. It was not with philosophy, or speculation, or apologetics, that he fought these pretended spiritualists. 'God,' said he, 'enlightens us sufficiently in Scripture; it is our want of knowing them thoroughly that is the cause and source of all errors.'† He attacked Quintin and pressed him hard. He quoted the commandments of God against theft and murder: 'You call God impure,' he said, 'a thief and a robber,‡ and you add that there is no harm in it.§ Who, I pray, has condemned impurity, theft, murder, if God has not?' . . . Quintin, who was generally very liberal with passages from Scripture, answered with a smile: 'We are not subject to the letter which killeth, but to the Spirit which giveth life. . . The Bible contains allegories, myths which the Holy Spirit explains to us.'|| 'You make your Scripture a nose of wax,' said Calvin, 'and play with it, as if it were a ball.'¶—'You find fault with my language because you do not understand it,' said Quintin.—'I understand it a little better than you do yourself,' retorted Calvin; 'and I see pretty plainly

\* *Opusc. franç.* p. 662; *Opusc. lat.* p. 518.

† Calvin, *Matth.* xxii. 29.

‡ 'Deum latronem, furem, scortatorem.'—*Opusc. lat.* p. 530.

§ 'Nigrum in album commutare.'—*Ibid.*

|| *Opusc. franç.* p. 663; *Opusc. lat.* p. 519.

¶ 'Scriptura nasus cereus fiat, aut instar pila, sursum deorsumque agitetur.'—*Opusc. lat.* p. 519; *Opusc. franç.* p. 663.



that you desire to mislead (*embabouiner*) the world by absurd and dangerous trifling.'

The 'spirituals' were by turns protestant or catholic as suited them. Their manner of seeing accorded very well with their pantheism, and they would have been quite as much at their ease among the Hindoos and the Turks. This broadness, which misled the moderate party, offended Calvin. One day, when Quintin said with unction: 'I am just come from a solemn mass, celebrated by a cardinal. . . I have seen the glory of God,'\*—'I understand you,' said Calvin, rather coarsely; 'in your opinion, a canon ought to continue in his luxury, and a monk in his convent, like a pig in a sty.'†

The pantheists made proselytes. 'By dint of intrigue and flattery, they attracted the simple ignorant poor, whom they made as lazy as themselves.' They tried to make way with the learned and the great, and even to creep into the hearts of princes. Their high pretensions to spirituality staggered weak minds, and the convenient principle by which every man ought to remain in the Church to which he belonged, even were it sunk in error, made timid and irresolute characters lean to their side. A priest, who had become Quintin's head champion, succeeded in deceiving the excellent Bucer by means of the false appearance he put on; and ten years later, an elect soul, Margaret, was dazzled and deceived by their hypocritical spirituality. About 4,000 were led astray in France.

\* 'Se gloriam Dei videre.'—*Opusc. franç.* p. 688; *Opusc. lat.* p. 547.

† 'Tanquam porci in hara stertere.'—*Opusc. lat.* p. 541; *Opusc. franç.* p. 688.



Calvin was not one of those individuals 'who remain in doubt and suspense;' from the very first he detected pantheism and materialism under the veils with which these men sought from time to time to conceal their errors, and boldly pointed them out. His uprightness and frankness presented a very striking contrast to their dissimulation and cunning. 'They turn their cloak inside out at every moment,' he said, 'so that you do not know where to hold them. One of the principal articles of their creed is that men ought to counterfeit, whilst even the heathens have said "that it is better to be a lion than a fox." '\*

He found that their doctrines were impious and revolutionary. To confound God with the world was (he thought) to take from the world the living personal God who is present in the midst of us; and consequently to expose not only the Reformation and Christianity but the whole social system to utter ruin. The conduct of these pretended 'spirituals' was already sufficient in his eyes to characterise and condemn their system. 'What has metamorphosed Quintin and his companions from tailors into teachers,' said Calvin, 'is that, preferring to be well fed and at their ease to working, they find it convenient to gain their living by prating, as priests and monks do by chanting.' †

It was not until later that Calvin wrote his excellent treatise against the libertines; ‡ but, says Theo-

\* *Opusc. lat.* p. 501. 'Præstabilius sit leoni quam vulpeculæ similem esse.'

† 'Ut quemadmodum sacerdotes et monachi cantillando, sic ipsi garrundo vitam quærerent.'—*Opusc. franç.* p. 652; *Opusc. lat.* p. 511.

‡ 'Adversus fanaticam et furiosam sectam libertinorum, qui se spirituales vocant, instructio,' &c.—*Opusc. lat.* p. 506.

dore Beza, 'it was then (during his stay in Paris) that he first encountered those teachers who revived in our times the detestable sect of the Carpocratians, abolishing all difference between good and evil.'\* He encountered a probably still more dangerous doctrine.

About that time a stranger, whose proceedings were rather mysterious, used to appear at rare intervals in the little circles of Paris. Many persons spoke highly of him. They said, he could not be reproached with any immoral tendencies, while his subtle understanding, his brilliant genius, his profound knowledge of natural science, and his fiery imagination, seemed as if they would make him one of the most surprising and influential leaders of the epoch. This was Michael Servetus, a man of the same age as Calvin. Born at Villeneuve in Arragon, he had studied the law at Toulouse, and afterwards published a daring work entitled, *On the Errors of the Trinity*. He put himself forward as a teacher of truth and a thorough reformer. The great mysteries of faith were to give way to a certain pantheism, enveloped in mystical and Sabellian forms. It was not Roman-catholicism alone which he desired to reform, but the evangelical reformation also, substituting for its scriptural and practical character a philosophic and rationalistic tendency.

In order to accomplish this transformation of protestantism, Servetus began by associating with the reformers of German Switzerland and of Germany. Ecolampadius, having examined him, declared that

\* Théod. de Bèze, *Hist. Eccles.* i. p. 9.

he could not count him a christian unless he acknowledged the Son as partaking through all eternity of the real Godhead of the Father. Melanchthon was alarmed at hearing his doctrines: 'His imagination is confused,' he said; 'his ideas are obscure. He possesses many marks of a fanatical spirit.\* He raves on the subjects of Justification and the Trinity... O God! what tragedies this question will occasion among our posterity!' †

We may easily understand the painful impression Servetus made on these two men, the most tolerant of the sixteenth century. He was, as we have said, a mystic rationalist; but rationalism and protestantism, which many persons confound together, are two opposite poles. Nothing excited the indignation of the reformers more than this pride of human reason which pretends unaided to explain God, and to accomplish without his help the moral renovation of man. The Spanish doctor, finding himself thus rejected by the German divines, quitted those parts sore vexed and exclaiming: 'May the Lord confound all the tyrants of the Church! Amen.' ‡ He went to Paris under the name of Michael de Villeneuve.

Servetus had an object in going to France. If he succeeded in planting his standard in that mighty country, near that university which had been for so many ages the queen of intelligence, his triumph (he thought) would be secure. He willingly left Germany

\* 'In Serveto multæ notæ fanatici spiritus.'—*Corp. Ref.* ii. p. 630.

† 'Bone Deus! quales tragoedias excitabit hæc quæstio ad posteros.'—*Ib.* p. 630.

‡ 'Perdat Dominus omnes ecclesiæ tyrannos! Amen.'—*Christ. Restitutio*.

to the Germans. That French nation which has the prerogative of universality, which succeeds in everything, which is so intelligent, so frank, so communicative, so practical and so active—he will select to be the organ of the second Reformation. Servetus thought the French reformers more daring than those of Saxony. He had heard of a young doctor of great ability, who desired to carry the reform farther than Luther, and he thought he had found his man. But he was mistaken; that man was far above his empty theories.

Calvin could not and would not have any other God than Him who gives us life, who has ransomed us, and who sanctifies us—the Father, God above us; the Son, God for us; the Holy Ghost, God in us. This threefold relation with God, which Scripture revealed to him and which entirely satisfied his inward longings, forced him to recognise a *difference* in God; but on the other hand, *unity* being essential to the Deity, he was bound to maintain it at any cost, and he thus felt himself constrained to embrace the idea of a divine Trinity. Against this doctrine Servetus levelled his bitterest sarcasms. The Spaniard rejected what he denominated an ‘imaginary Trinity;’ he called those who believed in it ‘tritheists,’ or even atheists, and abused them in coarse language. ‘Jesus is man,’ he said; ‘the Godhead was communicated to Him by grace, but He is not God by nature. The Father alone is God in that sense.’\* He invited Calvin to a conference; puffed up and charmed with his own system, he fancied himself certain to convince

\* ‘Declarat Christum esse Deum, non natura sed specie, non per naturam sed per gratiam.’—*De Trinitatis Erroribus*, 1531, fol. 12.



the reformer, and flattered himself with the hope of making him his fellow-labourer.

The task was not an easy one. The object of the Reformation was to raise a spiritual temple, wherein troubled souls might find a refuge; and Calvin saw rash hands presuming to make it a receptacle for every error, and, in his own energetic language, ‘a den for murdering souls.’ He stood forth, therefore, to maintain the apostolic doctrine, and contended that Christ, who called himself the *only* Son of God, was a *son*, not like believers, in consequence of adoption; not like the angels, because of their communion with the Lord; but in the proper sense: and that if the son of a man has the nature of a man like his father, Jesus, the only Son of God, has in like manner the nature of God.

It was a question that seriously occupied many minds at this period. Servetus did not stand alone; other doctors, as Hetzer, Denck, Campanus, and Joris, had professed analogous errors. One universal cry was heard among the reformers when they saw Christ’s divinity attacked. Luther had declared that ‘this little spark would cause a great conflagration;’\* Zwingle had demanded that ‘this false, wicked, and pernicious doctrine’ should be opposed by every means;† and even the moderate Bucer, forgetting his christian gentleness, had gone so far as to declare from the pulpit that ‘a man like Servetus deserved to have his bowels plucked out and his body torn to pieces.’‡ Calvin resolved to accept Servetus’s invitation. These

\* Luther, *Ep.* iv. p. 423.

† Trechsel, *Protestant. Anti-trinit.* i. p. 100.

‡ ‘Pro suggestu pronuntiavit dignum esse qui avulsis visceribus discerperetur.’—Calvin, *Ep. et Resp.* p. 154.



two young men, born in the same year, gifted each of them with marvellous genius, unshakeable in their convictions, are about to enter the lists. What blows they will deal each other! What a struggle! Which will come off conqueror? If Luther, Zwingli, and Bucer are so animated, what will Calvin be? He was the one who showed the most moderate sentiments with regard to Servetus. Alas! why did he not continue so to the last? 'I will do all in my power to cure Servetus,' he said.\* 'If I show myself in public, I know that I expose my life; but I will spare no pains to bring him to such sentiments, that *all pious men may be able to take him affectionately by the hand.*'† Justice requires that we should take account of these feelings of Calvin with regard to Servetus.

The discussion was therefore resolved upon, and a certain number of friends were invited to be present. The time and place were settled, and when the day arrived, Calvin quitted De la Forge's house, and, proceeding down the Rue St. Martin to the Rue St. Antoine, found himself at the appointed hour at a house in this latter street, which had been selected for the colloquy. Servetus had not come, and Calvin waited for him; still the Spaniard did not appear, and the Frenchman was patient. What was the cause of his delay? Had Lieutenant-criminal Morin obtained information of the meeting, and was he preparing to catch the two young leaders by one cast of his net? After waiting for some time to no purpose, Calvin withdrew.‡ Servetus, who lived as a catholic in the

\* 'Obtuli meam operam ad eum sanandum.'—Calvin, *Op.* viii. p. 511.

† 'Nec per me stetisse quominus resipiscenti manum pii omnes porrigent.'—*Ibid.*

‡ 'Diutius quidem sed frustra expectavit.'—Beza, *Vita Calvini.*

midst of catholics, and made no scruple of taking part in the worship of the Roman church, probably feared that a public discussion with Calvin would make him known, and expose him to serious danger.\*

Servetus's challenge was not however without consequences. He had called Calvin into the lists, he had made him the champion of the doctrine of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; the opportunity of answering this challenge occurred twenty years later at Geneva. If the struggle had then been confined to a learned discussion between these two great minds, it would have been right enough; Servetus himself had challenged it. But the ideas of the times, from which Calvin (even while seeking a relaxation in the form) could not free himself, led to one of those distressing calamities, so frequent during a long series of ages in the annals of Rome, but of which, God be thanked! there is only this one instance in those of the Reformation.

Calvin did not fight only with the tongue: he was then hurrying on the printing of his first theological work. It was the book written against those who said 'that the soul was only the motion of the lungs, and that if it had been endowed with immortality at the creation, it had been deprived of it by the fall.'† 'Let us put down those people,' he said, 'who murder souls without appearing to inflict any wounds:' and with this view he had composed a work on the *Immortality of the Soul*, the title given it in a letter he wrote to Fabri.‡ It is to be regretted that he after-

\* Trechsel, *Die Protestant. Anti-trinit.* i. p. 110.

† 'Qua ruina immortalitatem suam perdiderit.'—*Opusc. lat.* p. 19.

‡ Calvinus Libertino (Fabri). Neuchatel MSS.

wards substituted the rather awkward one of *Psychopannychia*, 'the night or sleep of the soul;' as the first indicates the subject more clearly. At the same time also he combated the opinion of those 'good men,' as he calls them,\* who believed that the soul slept until the judgment-day. The first edition of this work, which bears the date of Paris 1534, came out probably immediately after Calvin had left that city or shortly before his departure.

This work gave him a place apart in the ranks of the reformers. In this his earliest theological treatise he displayed the character that distinguished him, and which those who surrounded him had already been able to recognise in his conversations. His theology would not be negative, but on the contrary exceedingly positive. His first work does not combat the errors of Rome. He stands forth as the defender of the soul, the advocate of christian spiritualism. He will be, as a great historian has said, 'the man called to build the Lord's citadel, of which Luther had laid the foundation.'† The force of conviction, the weight of proof, the power with which he employed the Scriptures, the simplicity and clearness of style, struck every reader. We shall not speak here of Calvin as a writer: we have done so elsewhere.‡ There might, however, be discerned in this work a defect of which Calvin never entirely cured himself: it contained energetic disdain and bitter invective. He saw this himself; he did more, he moderated these expressions in a second

\* 'Nonnullos bonos viros.'—*Opusc. lat. Psychopan. Lectoribus.*

† Johannes von Müller.

‡ For Calvin's influence on the French language see my *History of the Reformation*, vol. iii. bk. xii. ch. xv.

edition. 'I said certain things in it,' he wrote, referring to the first, 'with a bitterness and severity which may have offended certain delicate ears.\* I have therefore struck out some passages, added others, and changed many.' This did not prevent his falling into the same fault again, which, it must be acknowledged, was that of the age.

In spite of his frequent discussions, Calvin was happy in the house of De la Forge. Accustomed to a frugal life, he was little affected by the abundance of all sorts of good things by which he was surrounded; but the piety of the family delighted him much. He loved to see the master distributing the Gospel, relieving the poor, and listening to the interpretation of God's word, and took pleasure in his christian conversation. 'Most assuredly,' he said, 'true happiness is not circumscribed within the narrow limits of this frail life, and yet God promises also to believers a happy life, even in this pilgrimage and earthly dwelling-place, so far as the state of the world permits.† But the happiness of this blessed household was not to be of long duration. Lieutenant-criminal Morin was ere long to enter it, throw the wife into prison, lead the husband to the scaffold, and change the happiness of a peaceful christian family into sorrow, groans, and tears.

Would De la Forge be the only victim? Would the first blows be aimed at him? Would they not be aimed at Calvin, the author of that bold address which had thrown both city and university into confusion?

\* 'Quædam paulo acrius atque etiam asperius dicta quæ aures quorundam delicatulas radere fortasse possent.'—*Calvinus Libertino*.

† Calvin, *Psaumes*, 128.



Could the friend of Rector Cop long remain in the capital without once more exciting the attention of his enemies? A great persecution was about to burst forth, and if Calvin had been living in the Rue St. Martin at that time, he would doubtless have been seized along with the pious tradesman, burnt like the other martyrs, and the history of his life would have shrunk to a paragraph in the simple annals of Crespin's *Martyrs*. But the Father in heaven did not permit that *this sparrow should then fall to the ground*. Calvin had powerful motives which urged him to leave France. His time in Paris was so taken up with visits, interviews, and other business, that he sank under the burden, without being able to discharge what he looked upon as his first duty. He was called to be a teacher rather than a mere preacher of the Gospel. To accomplish the great task he had set himself, he needed repose, leisure, and study, besides interviews and conferences with other theologians. He adopted a great resolution. 'I shall leave France,' he said, 'and go to Germany in order to find in some obscure corner the quiet refused to me elsewhere.'\*

Du Tillet had determined to accompany him. The two friends made their preparations; they procured two horses and two servants; and one day towards the end of July Calvin bade farewell to the pious tradesman who had been as a brother to him. Their clothes were packed away in portmanteaus, in one of which they hid their money, and then they were fastened on the crupper; and so the travellers departed, the masters on horseback, the servants on foot.

\* 'Relicta patria, Germaniam concessi, ut in obscuro aliquo angulo abditus, quiete denegata fruerer.'—*Præf. in Psalm.*



‘On reaching the frontier,’ says a catholic historian, ‘Calvin could not restrain his emotion; he lifted up his voice in distress that France rejected the men whom God sent her, and even tried to murder them.’\* This exclamation appears rather doubtful, and the historian who reports it is not always accurate. Still it is possible and not unnatural.

The travellers having entered Lorraine, stopped at Delme near Nancy, where they halted and walked about the town. During this time one of their servants, who knew where the money had been hidden, took advantage of their absence, placed the valise on the best of the two horses, and rode away as fast as he could. When Calvin and Du Tillet returned, they discovered the robbery. They wished to pursue the thief, but could not catch him.† The two friends were greatly embarrassed, when the other servant approached and offered them ten crowns which he had with him. They accepted his offer and were able to reach Strasburg.

If Calvin had remained in his own country, he would never have been able to fulfil the career to which he was called; he had no other prospect but the stake. And yet, he will indeed be her reformer. . . True, he quitted her, but a divine hand fixed him as near as possible to that land of his affections and of his sorrows. From the picturesque valley, whence the Rhone continually pours its waves into France, God was about to scatter by Calvin’s means, throughout all the provinces of that great kingdom, the living waters of the Gospel of Christ.

\* Varillas, *Hist. des Réc. rel.* ii. p. 490.

† Beza, *Vita Calvini*.

## CHAPTER IX.

## THE PLACARDS.

(OCTOBER 1534.)

CALVIN had hardly left Paris when the clouds gathered over the little church of the metropolis. 'There was no year,' says a chronicler of the sixteenth century, speaking of 1534, 'when such great marvels happened in divers countries; but of all these marvels none is more worthy to be remembered than that which caused it to be named *the year of the placards*.'\*

The christians of Paris met together frequently in one another's houses. 'The Lord,' said they, 'commands His disciples to go forth and scatter the doctrine of salvation into all corners of the world.' The hive was swarming, as it had recently done at Poitiers. Le Comte, whom we have mentioned, quitted his friends, and after many dangers reached Morat, to assist Farel in his evangelical work.† Another Lutheran, whose journey was to be productive of disastrous results, followed the same road not long after.

There were, as we have seen, two distinct parties among the evangelical christians of France: the *temporisers* and the *scripturists*. They sometimes

\* Crespin, *Martyrol*. fol. 3. Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Hérés.* viii. ch. v.

† Ruchat, *Hist. Réf. Suisse*, tom. iii. p. 132, after 'a MS. journal of Jean le Comte.

came in contact, and each of them resolutely defended their own views. The *temporisers* looked to Margaret, to the king her brother, and to alliances with Henry VIII. and the Protestants of Germany. Knowing that Francis I. detested the monks, they hoped, with the help of the Du Bellays, to give France a moderate reform, and desired to do nothing that might offend him. They waited.

As for the *scripturists*, that is to say, the evangelicals of the school of Calvin, diplomacy made them feel uneasy; the king's protection annoyed them, and the idea of recognising the bishops and the pope alarmed them. They saw all kinds of superstition following in the train of the hierarchy, and they were determined to resist stoutly everything that might bring back the *idols* to the temple of God.

As the two parties could not come to an understanding, they determined to send one of their number to Switzerland, in order to obtain the opinion of Farel and the other refugees. Should they wait or should they act?—such was the question they put. They selected for that consultation a simple, pious, intelligent Christian, by name Feret, who belonged to the royal pharmacy: he accepted the mission and departed. No one suspected at that time that this journey would lead to an explosion that would shake the capital, terrify France, and perhaps destroy the cause of the Reformation.

Feret proceeded to Switzerland. He had hardly crossed the Jura when a striking spectacle met his eyes. Everything was in commotion, as in a hive of bees. Farel, Viret, Saunier, Olivetan, Froment, Marcourt, Hollard, Le Comte, and others besides,

coming from Dauphiny, Basle, Paris, Strasburg, or belonging to the country, were boldly preaching the evangelical doctrine everywhere. At Neufchatel all *idolatry* had been removed from public worship; and the same had been done at Aigle, and in its four *mandements*. Orbe, Grandson, and the Pays de Vaud were beginning to make up their minds; Geneva was tottering; the old Waldenses of Piedmont were holding out their hands to the new reformers. In many places they were even ‘destroying the altars and breaking down the images,’ according to the command in Deuteronomy.\* What a contrast with the timid precautions of the christians of Paris! Feret was quite struck with it, and that alone was an answer.

He explained to the christians to whom he was accredited the very different state of things at Paris; he described the difficulties of France and the two parties that existed among the reformed, and asked for their advice. Farel and his friends held that a subject ought not to rise in rebellion against his lord, but if the king of France commanded anything forbidden by the King of heaven, it was necessary to obey him who was the master of the other. These decided christians rejected all those medleys of the Gospel and popery that Francis I., Margaret of Navarre, Du Bellay, and even Melanchthon (as it was said) desired. ‘These two (the Gospel and the pope) cannot exist together,’ they said, ‘any more than fire and water.’ The mass especially, that main point of the Romish doctrine, must, in their opinion, be abolished. If the papal hierarchy was the tree whose deadly shade

\* Chap. vii. 5.



killed the living seeds of the Word, the mass was its root. It must be plucked up, and thus prevented from stretching its fatal branches any longer over the wide field of christendom. The writing and posting of placards were proposed.

What indeed could be done? Oppression kept the boldest voices silent. It was necessary to draw up an energetic protest against error, and place it at the same moment, if possible, before the eyes of all France. Farel undertook the task; he could not write without making use of 'his trenchant style and thundering eloquence.'\* He reflected on the evils that afflicted his country. Indignation guided his daring pen; his style was uneven, harsh perhaps, but masculine, nervous, and full of fire. At length the evangelical protest was written, and Farel laid it before his brethren, who accepted it, believing that it would be *like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces*. The document was taken to the printer's, and came out in two forms: in placards to be posted up against the walls, and little tracts that were to be dropped in the streets.† The sheets were packed up and intrusted to the care of Feret, who departed with the precious bales containing 'the thunderbolt forged on Farel's anvil.'‡ No one stopped him at the frontier; he traversed Franche-Comté, Burgundy, and Champagne without difficulty, and arrived in Paris.

The evangelical christians of the capital, impatient to receive news from Switzerland, assembled hastily, and Feret laid the placard before them. Those

\* Crespin, *Martyrol*. fol. 111.

† Ibid.

‡ Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Hérés.* liv. vii. chap. v. In the Latin edition we read: 'Famoso libello a Farelllo, ut creditur, composito.'—p. 228.



energetic words, written at the foot of the Jura, seemed strangely bold when they were read under the walls of the Sorbonne, and at the gates of the Louvre. That brave and pious minister, Courault, came forward in the meeting as the organ of the ‘men of judgment,’ as they were afterwards called. ‘Let us beware of posting up these placards,’ he said; ‘we shall only inflame the rage of our adversaries thereby, and increase the dispersion of believers.’ But on the other hand, those who were alarmed at the steps taken by Francis I. to unite the pope and the Gospel were delighted. ‘Let us be cautious of so squaring our prudence,’ they said, ‘that it does not make us act like cowards. If we look timidly from one side to the other to see how far we can go without exposing our lives, we shall forsake Jesus Christ.’ In their view it was of importance to confess the Lord in the sight of France, and in order to do so, they were ready, like the martyrs of old, to encounter death. Many of the opposite party gave way, and the publication of the placard was resolved on. These sincere Christians were so firmly convinced of the divinity of their doctrine, and so full of faith, that they expected an intervention from God—not a miraculous one indeed, but an extraordinary one—‘a rushing mighty wind from heaven,’ and ‘cloven tongues like as of fire,’ which should kindle all hearts. They thought that God would by this declaration open to France the gate of His spiritual treasures.

The consultation continued. Where should they circulate this paper? asked some. ‘All over Paris,’ was the reply:—‘All over France,’ answered others. They were not unknown individuals who deliberated

thus: the wealthy tradesman, Du Bourg, and his friends were there, and if Bartholomew Milon could not act, at least he gave advice which was to cost him dear. The warmest friends of the Reformation shared the work between them: each man had his district, his province. 'They portioned out the kingdom in order to do *the same in every city*,' says the catholic Fontaine; and the night of the 24th of October was appointed for this daring enterprise.\* The placards were divided among those who were to post them up or to distribute them. Knowing that unless God made the truth enter into the heart, they would do nothing but *beat the air in vain*,† these pious men exhorted one another to 'pray to God with fervent zeal.' Then every man returned home, carrying with him a bundle of placards and a parcel of tracts.

When the night came, the selected men left their houses, carrying the printed sheets in their hands; and each one did his duty in his quarter, silently and mysteriously. The fervent christian who thus hazarded his life, took, however, certain precautions; he listened to hear if any one were coming, hastily stuck the bill on the wall, and then glided noiselessly away to some other place, where he posted up another. In a short time the streets, market-places, and cross-ways were covered with the evangelical proclamation, some being fixed even on the walls of the Louvre. As the day appeared, most of these daring men returned home; but others hid themselves, and from a distance watched to see what would happen.

\* This is the date given in the *Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris*, p. 440. Fontaine, in his *Histoire Catholique*, gives the 18th October.

† Calvin, *passim*.

A few persons began to come out of doors; they went up to the large handbills and stopped to examine them. Gradually a crowd was formed, some friars approached: hundreds of persons of every class collected round the strange placards. They were read aloud, remarks were made upon them, and the most diverse sentiments were expressed; many persons gave vent to indignation and threats; some approved, the greater part were astounded. The crowd was particularly large in the streets of St. Denis and St. Honoré, in the Place Royale, in the city, at the gates of the churches, and of the Sorbonne and the Louvre. Let us read this terrible handbill, as it was read in the streets of the capital. The public of our age will find it too severe and possibly too long, and we must abridge it a little; but the men of the sixteenth century read it to the end, and notwithstanding its defects, its action was powerful. Like the shock of an earthquake, it made all France tremble. It began with a solemn invocation:—

## TRUTHFUL ARTICLES

CONCERNING THE HORRIBLE, GREAT, AND UNBEARABLE ABUSES

OF THE POPISSH MASS,

INVENTED DIRECTLY

AGAINST THE HOLY SUPPER OF OUR LORD,

THE ONLY MEDIATOR AND ONLY SAVIOUR, JESUS CHRIST.

‘I invoke heaven and earth in witness of the truth against that proud and pompous popish mass, for the world (if God does not apply a remedy) is and will be by it totally desolated, ruined, lost, and undone;

seeing that in it our Lord is outrageously blasphemed, and the people blinded and led astray. Which ought not to be borne any longer.

‘In the first place, every believing christian ought to be very certain that our Lord and only Saviour, Jesus Christ, the great bishop and pastor ordained of God, has given His body and soul, His life and blood for our sanctification, by a perfect sacrifice. To renounce this sacrifice as if it were insufficient, to replace it by a visible sacrifice, namely, the mass, as if Christ had not fully satisfied for us the justice of His Father, and as if He were not the Saviour and Mediator, would be a terrible and damnable heresy.

‘The world has been, and in many places still is, filled with wretched high-priests, who, as if they were our redeemers, set themselves in Christ’s place, and pretend to offer an acceptable sacrifice to God for the salvation both of the living and the dead: do not these people make the apostles and evangelists liars, and do they not even belie themselves, since they chant every Sunday at vespers that Jesus Christ is a *priest for ever*? . . .

‘Yes, by the great and admirable sacrifice of Jesus Christ all outward and visible sacrifice is abolished. Christ, says the Epistle to the Hebrews (which I entreat everybody to read diligently), *was offered once for all.—By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.* Christ offered *once* and not *often* . . . If the sacrifice is perfect, why should it be repeated? . . . Come forward then, ye priests, and answer if ye can!

‘That is not all. By this unhappy mass the whole world has been plunged into a common idolatry. Are



we not given to understand falsely that under the forms of bread and wine Jesus Christ is corporeally, really, and personally contained, in flesh and bone, as long, broad, and entire as when He was alive? . . . And yet Holy Scripture and our faith teaches us the contrary, that Jesus Christ, after his resurrection, ascended into heaven. St. Paul writes to the Colossians, *Seek those things which are above, where CHRIST SITTETH ON THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD.* Listen: St. Paul does not say: Seek Christ who is in the mass, or in the sanctuary, or in the box, or in the cupboard. He says: Seek Christ *who is in heaven.* If the body is in heaven, it is not on earth; and if it is on earth, it is not in heaven. A real body can never be in more than one place at a time, where it occupies a certain space of a certain size. It is impossible for a man twenty or thirty years old to be hidden in a bit of dough like their wafer.

‘Augustin knew this well when he wrote: “Until the world comes to an end, *the Lord is on high* ; but His divinity is everywhere.”\* And so did Fulgentius, when he wrote: “The Lord was absent from heaven, according to his human nature, when he was on earth; and *he left the earth when he ascended to heaven.* But as for the divine nature, it never quitted heaven when he came down to earth, and did not leave the earth when he ascended to heaven.”†

‘When any one of us says: *Lo, here is Christ, or there!* the priests say: We must believe him. But Christ says: *Believe it not.* At the moment of the

\* ‘Sursum Dominus est.’—Aug. *Ep. ad Dardanum.*

† ‘Secundum humanam substantiam dereliquerat terram cum ascendisset in cœlum.’—Fulg. *ad Thrasimundum*, lib. ii.



communion they chant *Sursum corda*, Lift your hearts on high; but they do the contrary, and exhort us to seek Christ not *on high*, but in their hands, in their boxes, and in their cupboards.

‘Nay, further, these blind priests, adding error to error, teach in their madness, that after they have breathed upon or spoken over the bread, which they take between their fingers, and also over the wine that they put in the chalice, there remains neither bread nor wine, but that Jesus Christ is there alone by *transubstantiation* . . . . Big and monstrous words . . . . doctrine of devils, opposed to all Scripture. I ask these cope-wearers, Where did they find that big word TRANSUBSTANTIATION? . . . St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. John, St. Paul, and the old Fathers never spoke of it. When they made mention of the Lord’s Supper, those holy writers openly and simply called the bread and wine, *bread* and *wine*. St. Paul does not say: Eat the body of Jesus Christ; but: Eat this *bread*. Ah! Scripture employs no deception, and there is no pretence in it. The bread is therefore bread.

‘Presumptuous enemies of the Word of God, shameless heretics, they are not satisfied with pretending to enclose the body of Jesus Christ in their wafer; but see into what absurdities their superstition leads them. They are not ashamed to say that the body of Jesus Christ may be eaten by rats, spiders, and vermin. . . Yes, there it is printed in red letters in their missals, in the twenty-second Item, beginning thus: If the body of the Lord be eaten by mice and spiders, be reduced to nothing, or be very much gnawed, or if the maggot is found whole inside . . . let it be burned and placed in the reliquary!

‘O earth! why openest thou not to swallow up these horrible blasphemers? O hateful men! Is that gnawed body really the body of Jesus Christ, the Son of God? . . . Would the Lord suffer Himself to be eaten by mice and spiders? He who is the bread of angels and of all the children of God, has been given us to feed vermin? Him, who is incorruptible, at the right hand of God, will you make liable to worms and rottenness? Did not David write the contrary, prophesying his own resurrection? . . . Wretches! were there no other evil in all your infernal theology than the irreverence with which you speak of the precious body of Jesus, are you not blasphemers and heretics? . . . yea, the greatest and most enormous the world has ever seen.

‘Kindle, yes, kindle your faggots, but let it be to burn and roast yourselves. . . Why should you kindle them for us? Because we will not believe in your idols, in your new Gods, in your new Christs, who let themselves be eaten by vermin, and in you also, who are worse than vermin.

‘What mean all these games you play round your God of dough, toying with him like a cat with a mouse? You break him into three pieces . . . and then you put on a piteous look as if you were very sorrowful; you beat your breasts . . . you call him the Lamb of God, and pray to him for peace. St. John showed Jesus Christ ever present, ever living, living all in one—an adorable truth! but you show your wafer divided into pieces, and then you eat it, calling for something to drink. . . What would any man say who had never witnessed such monkey tricks? . . . Did St. Paul or St. John ever eat Christ in that

manner? and would they acknowledge such mountebanks as the servants of God?

‘Finally the practice of your mass is very contrary to the practice of the Holy Supper of Jesus Christ! . . . Certainly, there is no marvel in that, for there is nothing common between Christ and Belial.

‘The Holy Supper of Jesus Christ reminds us of the great love with which He loved us so that He washed us in His blood. It presents to us on the part of the Lord the body and blood of His Son, in order that we should communicate in the sacrifice of His death, and that Jesus should be our everlasting food. It calls us to make protest of our faith, and of the certain confidence we have of being saved, Jesus having ransomed us. By giving to all of us only one bread it reminds us of the charity in which we, being all of the same spirit, ought to live. That Holy Supper, being thus fully understood, rejoices the believer’s soul, in all humility, and imparts to him all gentle kindness and loving charity.

‘But the fruit of the mass is very different. By it the preaching of the Gospel is prevented. The time is occupied with bell-ringing, howling, chanting, empty ceremonies, candles, incense, disguises, and all manner of conjuration. And the poor world, looked upon as a lamb or as sheep, is miserably deceived, cajoled, led astray—what do I say? bitten, gnawed, and devoured as if by ravening wolves.

‘By means of this mass they have laid hands on everything, destroyed everything, swallowed up everything. By its means they have disinherited princes and kings, lords and shopkeepers, and all whom we could name, dead or alive. . . . O false witnesses,

traitors, robbers of the honour of God, and more hateful than the devils themselves!

‘In short, the truth chases them, the truth alarms them, and by truth shall their reign shortly be destroyed for ever.’

Such was the proclamation posted up in Paris and all over France. We trace in it, we must confess, the coarseness of the language of the sixteenth century, and especially in a passage which must have greatly stirred the anger of the clergy, where the placard, in speaking of the pope and cardinals, priests and monks, calls them false prophets, wolves, seducers, and gives them other names besides, which are rarely employed in our days except in the bulls of the Roman pontiffs. We discover in this writing the antipapistical spirit in all its unreflecting force. Certainly, when it says that the true Supper of Christ ‘rejoices the believer’s soul, and imparts to him all gentle kindness and loving charity,’ we taste the savour of the Gospel; but, generally speaking, this manifesto is an engine of war with a brazen head. If we transport ourselves to the early days of the Reformation, we can understand that it was necessary to employ vigorous battering-rams to beat down the old and apparently unshakeable walls of popery. Every line in this placard reveals to us the warm-hearted, but also ‘the impetuous and eloquent Farel, frank, decisive, intrepid among men, who had the admirable heart of the knight without reproach, with his thirst for danger, and was the Bayard of the battles of God.’\* The work resembles the workman.

\* Michelet, *Hist. de France*; the volume entitled ‘La Réforme.’



While conceding something to the times in which the placard was written and posted up, we may ask whether that act proceeded solely from a movement of the mind free from every tinge of human passion, and was one of the arms that the apostles would have employed. In any case it seems to us certain that more moderate language would really have been stronger, and more surely have attained its end. This is what the event will show.



## CHAPTER X.

## THE KING'S ANGER.

(AUTUMN 1534.)

THE terrible placard posted up during the night in Paris and over a great part of France, 'in every corner,' says Sturm,\* produced an immense sensation. The people were agitated, the women and the weak alarmed, and the magistrates filled with indignation.† But the adversaries of popery did not relax their blows. At almost the same time there appeared another treatise 'against the pope's traffickers and taverners.' This writing, which was less evangelical, was rather in the mocking spirit of Erasmus. 'Everything must subserve the cupidity of the priests,' it said; 'heaven, earth, and hell, time, all creatures animate and inanimate, wine, bread, and oil, flax, milk, butter, cheese, water, salt, fire, and fumigations. . . . From all these they knew how to extract . . . silver and gold. And the dress of the dealer adds to the price of his wares, for a mass by an abbot or a bishop costs more than one by a curate or a friar. Like women of ill fame, they sell their shame all

\* 'Per universam fere Galliam nocte in omnibus angulis affixerunt manibus.'—*Corp. Ref.* ii. p. 855.

† 'Perturbatus hac re populus, territæ multorum cogitationes, concitati magistratus.'—*Ibid.* p. 856.

the dearer the gayer the ornaments they wear.’\* The agitation increased hourly; priests and friars, scattered among the groups of citizens and people, fomented their anger, increased their terror, and circulated false reports. ‘The heretics,’ it was said, ‘have resolved to surprise the catholics during divine service, and to murder men, women, and children without mercy.’ An absurd imputation, invented, says a Romish historian, to make the reformers odious. It was believed all the same, and horrible rumours began shortly to circulate among the crowd. ‘A frightful plot has been laid against the State and the Church. This placard is the signal; the heretics intend to fire the churches and palaces, massacre the catholics, abolish the monarchy, and reduce the kingdom to a desert. . . Death to the Lutherans!’

Nowhere was the fury so great as at the Sorbonne among the doctors: the first outbreak of their anger was incredibly violent. ‘This action,’ says the chronicler, ‘led them into such fury that their former violence seemed tolerable. No tempest ever equalled it in severity.’† The thunderbolt was destined, however, to be launched from a different quarter.

Francis I., who was then at Blois, had for some time felt a certain uneasiness with regard to the Reform. One day in 1534, when he was complaining of the pope to the nuncio, and insinuating that France might easily imitate the example of Henry VIII., ‘Frankly, sire,’ replied the nuncio, ‘you will be the first to suffer; the religion of a people cannot be changed

\* ‘Qua quidem in re, nihil differunt a meretricibus.’—See the writing *In pontificios mercatores et caupones*.—Gerdes, iv. p. 103.

† Crespin, *Martyrol.* fol. 112 verso.

without their next demanding the change of the prince.' It had been of no use to tell Francis that neither the German princes, nor Henry VIII. himself, had been dethroned by the Reformation: the nuncio's words had sunk like an arrow into his heart.

Blois was not exempt from the evangelical movement, and the Reform had made its way among the choristers of the royal chapel: it was one of these who was commissioned to post up the placards in that city. Being of a daring and enthusiastic temperament, this individual resolved to post the protestant manifesto in the castle itself, to which he had easy access.\* Entering it at a favourable moment, he crept with his handbills as far as the king's chamber, and being satisfied that there were no servants or courtiers in the gallery, he fastened the paper to His Majesty's door, and then retired hastily.† This imprudent and guilty action, for it was disrespectful, was to be cruelly atoned for.

Montmorency and the Cardinal de Tournon appeared in the morning before the king as was their custom. They had the ear of Francis I., and had long been looking for an opportunity to deal a desperate blow at the Reformation. Just as these two personages were about to enter the king's closet, they caught sight of the placard posted on the door; they stopped and read it, and taking the matter seriously, not without reason, they tore down the paper angrily, and carried it in to their master.‡ Nothing in the world could excite him so much as an attack like that:

\* *Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris*, published by Lalanne, p. 449.

† Fontaine, *Hist. Catholique*.

‡ 'Ante regis conclave.'—*Corp. Ref.* ii. p. 856.

his royal dignity was in his eyes almost as sacred as the Divine majesty. He trembled and turned pale; he took the paper and then gave it back, and disturbed by such unheard-of audacity, he ordered them to read it.

It was what Tournon wanted. He read the document to the king, dwelling on the most irritating passages; but the prince could not hold out to the end. The insult offered to his person, the impression which such a public scandal might produce on his allies, and especially on the pope, the reflection that at the very moment when he was preparing the reconciliation of protestants and catholics, a few fanatics should stir up all the passions of the priests and the people, and cause his pacific designs to fail—all this exasperated his mind more than the attack upon the mass. Those who were about him took advantage of the opportunity, and represented the affair as one of high-treason. Montmorency and De Tournon drove the bolt deep into the king's heart. 'He burst into a transport of passion,' wrote Sturm to Melanchthon; 'he was so inflamed,' says the *Book of Martyrs*;<sup>\*</sup> 'he put himself in such a rage,' says Theodore Beza; 'he became so hot that everybody trembled about him,' says the catholic Fontaine.—'Let all be seized without distinction,' he exclaimed, 'who are suspected of *Lutheresy*. I will exterminate them all.'

The event caused a great agitation; nothing else was talked of, and every one described it in his own manner. 'Do you know,' said some, 'that the king, in the very height of his passion, taking his handker-

<sup>\*</sup> Crespin's *Martyrologie*.



chief from his pocket, pulled out a placard, which fell at his feet: some clever fellow had slipped the copy in.' 'You may believe it, if you like,' says Fontaine, estimating this popular story at its real value. The whole household of the castle was immediately on the alert to discover the author of the misdeed, which was no hard matter. The Lutheran opinions of the chorister were known to many; he was arrested, put in chains, and sent to Paris to be tried.\*

But the king's wrath was not to be confined to this man. The crime had been committed everywhere, the punishment must be inflicted everywhere. 'Write and order the parliament to execute strict justice,' said the king; 'and tell the lieutenant-criminal that, to encourage him, I increase his salary by six hundred livres a year for life.† Let inquisition be made forthwith through all the realm for the people who are such enemies of God.'

The parliament had not waited for the king's orders. On the morrow of the famous day, the 26th October, the chief president, Pierre Lizet, convened all the chambers, and the crowded court, being moved and indignant, ordered a minute search and processions to be made. The trumpets sounded, the people assembled, and an officer of the parliament proclaimed: 'Whosoever shall give information as to the person or persons who stuck up the said placards, he shall receive from the court a reward of one hundred crowns; and all who conceal them shall be burnt.‡'

All this while the evangelical christians, and

\* *Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris*, p. 449.

† Fontaine, *Hist. Cath. Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris*, p. 452.

‡ Crespin, *Martyrol*, fol. 112 verso.



especially those who had set fire to the mine, alarmed at the terrible explosion it had made, remained hidden and silent in their houses. They knew Morin's skill in discovering his victims and inventing tortures; a dark future saddened their countenances. Then were heard among them groans, and regrets, and mournful deliberations. 'What shall we do?' they said. Take flight!—What! leave home, and family, and country without knowing where to go? . . . How gloomy the future! But is it not better to lose all these than to lose your life? . . . Such were the heart-rending conversations held almost everywhere.\* Fathers and wives and children conjured with tears those whom they loved to get out of the way of the king's anger. Some of them, indeed, did leave their homes by night and flee.† Many of those who had not posted the placards, but who were known by the frank confession of their faith, thought that the danger could not concern them. . . . The unhappy people hesitated and delayed, and many of them paid dearly for their imprudent security.‡

The lieutenant-criminal, a great opponent of the religious movement, and a man of very dissolute life, of rare audacity in catching criminals, and remarkable subtlety in entrapping them by their answers,§ was meditating the plan of his campaign. His vanity, his greed, his hatred—all his passions were engaged in the business. He desired to catch all the heretics together by one cast of his net. But how? A bright

\* Crespin, *Martyrol.* folio 112 verso.

† 'Quidam mature sibi consulentes aufugerunt.'—*Corp. Ref.* ii. p. 856.

‡ 'Qui ad se ea pericula spectare non putabant, qui non contaminati erant eo scelere, hi etiam in partem peccatorum veniunt.'—*Ibid.*

§ Théod. de Bèze, *Hist. Ecclés.* p. 10.

idea struck him : by seizing one man, he hoped to take all the rest. ‘You know that shop where they sell sheaths and other such articles, in the Rue de la Vannerie leading to the Grève,’ he said to one of his officers. ‘Go and arrest the sheath-maker and bring him to me.’—‘Sheath-maker,’ he said, ‘you are one of the heretics, and what is worse, you are their *convener*, I know full well. It is you, do not deny it, who inform them of the places where their secret meetings are to be held. I have a wish to assemble them; you will lead me to their houses.’ The poor man, understanding what he meant, tremblingly refused to commit such treason. The lieutenant-criminal ordered a scaffold to be got ready. As soon as the officials had left the room, Morin turned to the sheath-maker: ‘It is you that conduct the people to church, and it is quite fair that you should begin the dance.’ The wretched man trembled. What a frightful alternative! How could he go to those whom he was wont to summon to the temple of God, in order to deliver them to the flames? There was a terrible struggle in his soul, but the fear of God was overcome, the light of reason extinct, all regard for honour put aside. ‘Satan entered into Judas,’ and he sought how he could betray his brethren. Believing himself ‘on the point of being burnt,’ says Beza, he promised all he was asked.\*

Paris was all in commotion. The streets were hung with drapery, processions were made, and in order to wipe out the insult offered to the mass, the *Corpus Domini* was carried solemnly through every parish.†

\* Théod. de Bèze, *Hist. Ecclés.* p. 10.

† *Journal d'un Bourgeois*, p. 44.

Morin took advantage of this agitation to conceal his proceedings. The treacherous sheath-maker went before him, pale and trembling; sergeants followed him at a little distance, and this cruel company glided silently through the streets. The sheath-maker stopped and pointed to a door: Morin entered. The startled family protested their innocence in vain. The lieutenant ordered the poor creatures to be manacled, and then continued his pitiless course. 'He spared no house, great or small,' says the chronicler, 'not even the colleges of the university of Paris.'

By degrees the news of this horrible expedition spread through the capital; anguish seized not only the friends of Farel, but all who were not fanatical adherents of Rome, and even the mere followers of learning or of pleasure, who had no taste for the Reformation. 'Morin made all the city quake,'\* for no one knew that he might not be among the number of the suspected. In many houses a look-out was kept, to observe whether the terrible troop was coming. Nicholas Valeton the receiver, who kept near the window, saw Morin approaching; hurriedly turning away, he said to his wife: 'Here he is, take the chest of books out of my room . . . I will run and meet him; I will speak to him and detain him, so as to give you time.' The startled young woman took the books and hastily thrust them into a hiding-place. 'Arrest this man,' said the lieutenant-criminal, immediately he saw Valeton; 'let him be put into close confinement.' He then went upstairs and searched every corner, saw the empty chest, but found nothing. Being impatient

\* Crespin, *Martyrol*, fol. 112.

to interrogate his prisoner, he did not stop, but proceeded straight to the prison whither he had been taken. He could not entrap him. The receiver, being a clever man, eluded all his questions. The lieutenant began to grow nervous; thinking to himself that the receiver had influence, and was a man likely to bear him a grudge, he resolved to destroy him by proceeding more craftily.\* The empty chest recurred to his mind; it must have contained something that had been removed at his approach. He immediately returned to the house of the accused, and standing near the chest, said in a natural tone: 'Madame, your husband has confessed that he kept his books and secret papers in this trunk. Besides, we are agreed; I desire to behave mercifully towards him; if you give a certain sum of money and tell me where the books are, I swear to you before God that your husband shall suffer no prejudice.' The wife, who was 'young, thoughtless,' and much disturbed by what had taken place, suffered herself to be caught by this trick. Morin put so many 'crafty and subtle questions,' that trusting in his promise, she told him everything. 'Good!' thought the lieutenant-criminal, 'he wished to hide his books from us, because he felt himself guilty of heresy.' Having seized them, he left the house, and putting the papers in a place of safety, went to look for other victims.

If there was one man in Paris who could not be suspected of having fixed up the placards, it was the poor paralytic: he could hardly leave his bed. That was of no consequence, and Bartholomew Milon was one of the first towards whose house Morin turned his

\* Crespin, *Martyrol.* fol. 113.



steps. He had had him in his prisons before this ; ‘but,’ says the *Book of Martyrs*, ‘the Lord had delivered him to make him serve for the consolation of his people in this bitter season.’ The lieutenant-criminal knew the shoemaker’s shop very well ; it was noted down in his books. He entered, like one out of his mind and foaming with rage, into the room where poor Berthelot was lying. ‘Come, get up!’ he cried, looking fiercely at him. Bartholomew, ‘not being terrified by the hideous face of the tyrant,’ replied, with a sweet smile : ‘Alas ! sir, it wants a greater master than you to make me rise.’—‘Take this fellow away,’ said the brute to his creatures, and after ordering them to carry with them a piece of furniture in which the paralytic kept his papers, he continued his inglorious campaign.

The lieutenant-criminal now proceeded towards the gate of St. Denis, to the sign of the *Black Horse*, and entered the shop of the wealthy tradesman, Du Bourg. When they caught sight of him, all who had any employment there were startled ; but although they loved their master well, no one stirred to defend him. The draper’s wife, daughter of another rich tradesman named Favereau, was not so tranquil : bursting into tears and shrieking, she conjured the cruel Morin not to take her husband away. Nothing could soften him, and he arrested Du Bourg. ‘He is one of those who pasted up the papers at the corners of the streets,’ said the lieutenant, and took him away. Next came the turn of the poor bricklayer, Poille, who was captured in his wretched hut.

After them many persons without distinction of rank or sex were shut up—those who had condemned



the placards as well as those who had approved of them. Informers were not wanting; they were given a fourth part of the property of the accused, and accordingly these *quadruplers* (as they were called)\* were indefatigable in hunting out victims; each of them could be accuser and witness in one. It was a reign of terror, and all good people were astounded at it.

The Sorbonne took advantage of this furious tempest to be avenged on Margaret and to punish her friends. That princess had quitted Béarn at the beginning of summer to be present at the marriage of her sister-in-law, Isabella of Navarre, with Viscount de Rohan, and had obtained her brother's permission for Roussel, who was with her, as well as Courault and Berthaud, to preach in Paris. These moderate men were strongly opposed to the act accomplished in the night of the 25th October; they were thrown into prison all the same. As there was no apprehension of offending the king's allies, many Germans were roughly seized, catholics as well as protestants; it was enough to have a transrhene accent to be suspected of heresy.

In the meantime Francis I. arrived in Paris. Cardinals, Sorbonne, Parliament, all the ardent friends of Roman-catholicism, outvied each other in zeal to confirm 'this wise and good prince'† in his religion, which had been somewhat shaken. They must take advantage of the crisis to detach him from his alliances with the English and the Saxons. Now was the time

\* 'Delatores et quadruplatores publice comparantur.' — Sturm to Melanchthon, *Corp. Ref.* ii. p. 856.

† Florimond Rémond.

for striking the blow and for severing these guilty ties. Cardinal de Tournon was particularly indefatigable and continually calling for punishments. When Du Chatel, bishop of Tulle, declared his opposition to sanguinary measures: 'Your tolerance has a suspicious look,' said De Tournon; 'it is unbecoming a true son of the Church.'—'I am acting like a bishop,' answered Du Chatel, firmly, 'and you like a hangman.' But nothing could check either the Cardinal or Duprat. They said to Francis: 'Carefully preserve the honour which Pius II. gave our kings when he said: The kings of France have this peculiarity, that they preserve the catholic faith and the honour of churchmen;' and added: 'We prevent the spreading of a fire, by knocking down the houses which it has first touched, and even the adjoining ones; do likewise, Sire; order those to be exterminated utterly and without reserve, who rebel against the Church. Kindle the fires and erect gibbets for the use of the Lutherans.'\*

A new act of madness (as some historians relate, but which we can hardly believe) inflamed the king's wrath still further. The very night of his arrival, we are told, the placards reappeared and were stuck on the gates of the Louvre. Nay more; it is asserted that as Francis I. was going to bed, he found the document under his pillow. The historian who records these things is very prone to exaggeration,† and I am inclined to think that such stories are mere fables invented by the enemies of the Reform, its friends being just then too terrified to show such boldness.

No one was more alarmed and more agitated than

\* Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Hérés.* vii. ch. v.

† Varillas.

Margaret. Nothing was more opposed to her nature than the style of the placards; and in reality they were not only an attack against Rome, but a protest against the conciliatory catholic system of the Queen of Navarre. Those who protested in this way bore a certain resemblance (not reckoning their christianity) to a well-known character in literature: they condemned alike the fanatic Romanists and the spiritual Catholics—

Les uns, parcequ'ils sont méchants et malfaisants,  
Et les autres, pour être aux méchants complaisants.\*

The queen had not the slightest suspicion of the blow that was preparing; and at the very moment when she believed the Gospel to be on the point of gaining the victory, everything seemed ended for it in France. Her brother's anger, the hard look he turned upon her, for perhaps the first time, alarmed this princess who had, it is true, a strong understanding, but also a heart easily moved and even timid. She shed floods of tears: she had no doubt that the whole affair was the result of a plot contrived between the Sorbonne and Cardinal de Tournon. 'My lord,' she said to the king, 'we are not sacramentarians. These infamous placards have been invented by men who wish to make the responsibility of their abominable manœuvre fall upon us.'†

She resolved to do everything to save Roussel at least; the very thought that he might be burnt terrified her. Why had she not left him at Pau? Seeing

\* 'The one, because they are wicked and evil-doers; the others because they gratify the wicked.'—*Le Misanthrope*.

† MSS. Bibl. imp. F. Supplément, No. 133.

the unusual coldness of the king, she commissioned the perfidious Montmorency to present her petition. 'They are occupied at this moment,' she wrote to him, 'with completing their case against Master Gérard; I hope the king will find him deserving something better than the stake. . . He has never held an opinion tainted with heresy. I have known him for five years, and if I had seen anything suspicious in him, I should not have put up so long with such poison. I entreat you, fear not to speak in my behalf.'\*

Montmorency, far from being disposed to do what the queen asked, endeavoured to ruin not only Roussel, but also Margaret herself; while Cardinals Duprat and De Tournon helped him to insinuate into the king's mind that his sister had some share in the matter of the placards. The coldness, the harshness even of Francis I. towards Margaret, increased daily; heartbroken, and unable to bear up any longer, she left Paris hastily.

Some went further than Duprat and De Tournon, and would have made their vengeance fall upon the king himself. The impetuous Beda, that tribune of the Sorbonne, who forgot neither his exile nor his imprisonment, sought an opportunity of revenging himself on the prince who had disgraced him. He hated Francis cordially; to do him an injury for the mere pleasure of doing it was his ambition. Not satisfied with ascribing the placards to Queen Margaret, he would accuse the king himself. Going into the pulpit, he preached a sermon against that prince full

\* *Lettres de la Reine de Navarre*, i. p. 299.



of invective. 'If it is not the king who had these bills posted up,' he said, 'at least he is responsible for them. The favour he shows the heretics, and his alliance with the King of England, are the cause of all this mischief.' This time the priest was mistaken in fancying himself more powerful than the sovereign. Being accused before the parliament of high-treason,\* Beda was thrown into prison, condemned to do penance in front of the church of Notre Dame, and to be confined for the rest of his days in the abbey of St. Michael, where he died. Thus perished in obscurity this furious forerunner of the League.

The revolutionary fury of the Romish champion softened Francis a little: finding himself accused as well as his sister, he recalled her to Paris. The queen, whose courage was as easily revived as it was cast down, arrived at the Louvre full of hope, not doubting that she would win over the king to the golden mean she loved so dearly. But she found Francis less accessible than she had fancied, and still showing signs of his ill-humour. But this did not stop her: imprudent and violent men had wished to abolish the mass by means of a fanatical placard, she will try to attain the same end by gentler and more prudent means. 'You want no church and no sacraments,' said the king to her, abruptly. The queen of Navarre replied that, on the contrary, she wanted both; and profiting by the opportunity for carrying out her plan, she represented to her brother that it was necessary to unite the whole of Christendom into one

\* 'Beda conjectus est in carcerem accusatus criminis læsæ majestatis.'

—Cop to Bucer, 5th April, 1535.

body with the bishop of Rome at its head; and that for this object, the priests should be brought to give up voluntarily certain scholastic doctrines and superstitious practices which stripped the ritual of the Church of its primitive beauty. Then, taking from her pocket a paper which Lefèvre had drawn up at her request, during her stay in the south, she presented it to the king: it was the confession of faith known as the *Mass of Seven Points*. ‘The priest will continue to celebrate mass,’ said Margaret to her brother, ‘only it will always be a *public communion*; he will not uplift the host; it will not be adored; priests and people will communicate under both kinds; there will be no commemorations of the Virgin or of the Saints; the communion will be celebrated with ordinary bread; the priest, after breaking and eating, will distribute the remainder among the people. Further, priests will have liberty to marry.’\* When Francis had heard the seven points of his sister’s mass, he asked her what was left of the Roman mass? Then the queen, taking him on his weak side—glory—represented to him that by means of this compromise he would unite all sects, and restore the Catholic unity which had been broken for so many centuries. Was it not the greatest honour to which a prince could aspire?

Francis I. appeared to be shaken, but yet he saw great difficulties. The queen begged him to send for Roussel and the two Augustine monks, Courault and Berthaud: ‘They will show you, I have no doubt,’

\* *France Protestante*, art. *Marguerite*. Freer, *Life of Marguerite d'Angoulême*, ii. p. 142.

she said, 'that the thing is practicable.' The king was curious, says an historian, and accepted the offer. The three evangelicals were taken from their prison and conveyed to the Louvre, where the queen presented them to her brother. She was full of joy: the matter of the placards, which threatened to ruin everything, might possibly be the means of saving everything. She was deceived. When Francis talked with her, it was no trouble to be like a kind brother with a sister; but in the presence of the two friars and Roussel he was a master. These persons displeased him: the zeal with which they pointed out the errors and abuses of the mass irritated him, and he sent them back hurriedly to prison. Men more zealous than they were, had already left their dungeons for the scaffold.

## CHAPTER XI.

## EXPIATIONS AND PROCESSIONS.

(END OF 1534 AND BEGINNING OF 1535.)

**A**N expiation was required for the purification of France—solemn ceremonies, sacrifices, and the stake. Nothing must be wanting to the expiatory work.

Du Bourg, Milon, Poille, and their friends were lying in prison, waiting for the day when they were to appear before their judges. The poor paralytic had remained as calm as in his father's shop: he was even calmer. Formerly, when friends or kindred, well accustomed to lift him, had taken him in their arms, he had cried out with the pain he felt in every limb. But now, in prison, he bore it all without pain, and 'the roughest handling seemed tender.' Receiving unknown strength from God, he was tranquil and joyful under tribulation. That holy patience spread peace in the hearts of his companions in misfortune. 'It is impossible to tell the consolation he afforded them,' says the chronicler. They all found themselves in a dark road which led to a cruel death, but this poor man walked before them like a torch, to guide and gladden them with its soft light.

The day of trial arrived: it was the 10th of Novem-



ber, a fortnight after the placards. Seven prisoners were taken to the Châtelet: entering that ancient building, where some remains of Cæsar's walls are still to be seen, they appeared before the criminal chamber, and the king's advocate in his scarlet robe called for a severe sentence. The poor paralytic could not be accused of running about the city to fasten up the handbills; he was convicted all the same of having some at his father's shop. Justice was at once prompt and cruel. These virtuous men were all condemned to have their property confiscated, to do public penance, and to be burnt alive at different places, and on different days. The court thought that by spreading the punishments, they would extend the terror more widely. The sentence was confirmed by the parliament.\*

On the 13th November, three days after the sentence, one of the turnkeys entered the cell of the paralytic, and lifting him in his arms like a child, carried him to a tumbril; the procession then took its way towards the Grève. As he passed before his father's house, Milon greeted it with a smile. He reached the place of execution, where the stake had been prepared. 'Lower the flames,' said the officer in command: 'the sentence says he is to be burnt *at a slow fire*.' This was a cruel prospect, still he uttered none but words of peace. He knew that to believe and to suffer was the life of a Christian; but he believed that the grace of suffering was still more excellent than the grace of faith. The enemies of the Reformation, who surrounded the burning pile, listened to the

\* *Journal d'un Bourgeois*, p. 444.

martyr with surprise and respect. The evangelicals were deeply moved, and exclaimed: 'Oh! how great is the constancy of this witness to the Son of God, both in his life and in his death!'\*

The next day it was the turn of Du Bourg, the tradesman of the Rue St. Denis. The wealth he had enjoyed during his life, the tears of his wife, the solicitations of his friends, had been ineffectual to save him. He was a man of decided character: when he had posted up the placard, he had done so boldly, although he knew that the act might cost him his life, and he stepped into the tumbril with the same courage. When he arrived in front of Notre Dame, he was made to alight; a taper was put into his hand and a cord round his neck, and he was then taken in front of the fountain of the Innocents, in the Rue St. Denis, quite near his house—he might have been seen from the windows—after which his hand was cut off. The hand that had fixed up the terrible protest against Rome fell to the ground, but the man stood firm, believing that 'if those who do battle under earthly captains push forward unto the death, although they know not what will be the issue, much more ought Christians who are sure of victory to fight until the end.' Du Bourg was taken to the Halles and there burnt alive.†

On the 18th it was Poille's turn. That old disciple of Briçonnet's showed as much firmness as his master had shown weakness. The mournful procession took its way towards the Faubourg St. Antoine, and halted before the church of St. Catherine: it was here the

\* Crespin, *Martyrol.* fol. 43.

† *Journal d'un Bourgeois*, p. 445.

stake had been prepared for the edification of the believers of that district. Poille got down from the cart, his features indicating peace and joy; in the midst of the guard and of the surrounding crowd, he thought only of his Saviour and his crown. 'My Lord Jesus Christ,' he said, 'reigns in heaven, and I am ready to fight for him on earth unto the last drop of blood.' This confession of the truth at the moment of punishment, exasperated the executioners. 'Wait a bit,' they said, 'we will stop your prating.' They sprang upon him, opened his mouth, caught hold of his tongue and bored a hole through it; they then, with refined cruelty, made a slit in his cheek, through which they drew the tongue, and fastened it with an iron pin.\* Some cries were heard from the crowd at this horrible spectacle: they proceeded from the humble christians who had come to help the poor bricklayer with their compassionate looks. Poille spoke no more, but his eyes still announced the peace which he enjoyed. He was burnt alive.

The punishments followed one another rapidly; many other sentences had been delivered. On the 19th November, a printer who had reprinted Luther's works, and a bookseller who had sold them, were taken together to the Place Maubert. The poor creatures had probably only thought it a good speculation; they were however burnt at the stake. On the 4th December a young clerk underwent the same punishment in front of Notre Dame. On the following day, a young illuminator, a native of Compiègne, who worked in a shop near the Pont St. Michel, died on

\* Crespin, *Martyrol*, fol. 113 verso.

the pile constructed at the foot of that bridge. Sometimes it was deemed sufficient 'to flog the accused naked,' to confiscate their property, and to banish them.\*

The terror was universal. All who had kept up any relations with the victims, or had occasionally frequented the meetings, were uneasy and troubled. There was great agitation in the evangelical houses: flight seemed the only refuge, and many made preparations for their departure.

Although we have spoken of the evangelical christians, we have not named them all. There were some whose profession, without being as public as that of Du Bourg, De la Forge, and Milon, was yet quite as sincere; many of them made themselves known at this time. Of this number were several nobles: the Seigneur of Roygnac and his wife, the Sieur of Roberval, lieutenant to the marshal of La Marche; the Seigneur of Fleuri in Brière, the Damoiselle Bayard, widow of Councillor Porte—all took the road of exile deeply sorrowing.† Trouble and alarm had penetrated even into the offices of the State: many government officers, Elouin du Lin, receiver to the parliament of Rouen, and William Gay, receiver of Vernay, being forced to choose between their livings and their consciences, abandoned their posts and fled. Among the fugitives were many who would not have been looked for among the converted. Master Pierre Duval, treasurer of the privy purse, touched by grace divine in the midst of the revels which came under his man-

\* Crespin, *Martyrol*. fol. 113 verso.

† *Chronique du Roi François I.* p. 130. This manuscript, published by M. Guiffrey in 1860, has described several new facts.



agement, and his secretary, René, also a convert, resolved to sacrifice those allurements of the world, which vanish with life, and fly from the terrible wrath of their master. Another Duval (John), probably of the same family as Pierre, keeper of the lodge in the forest of Boulogne, which served as a hunting rendezvous for the court, had been reached by the Word of God in the midst of his stags and falcons, just as his cook, William Deschamps, had been. In like manner, the Gospel had entered the Hôtel des Finances: two clerks of the Treasury had begun to seek for the *treasure in heaven*; their names were Claude Berberin and Leon Jamet, of Sansay in Poitou. All these men disappeared suddenly; some lay hid in remote villages where they had friends; some went to Basle, others to Strasburg. Jamet, a friend of Clement Marot (who has addressed to him four of those burlesque epistles known as *coq-à-l'âne*, and then in great vogue), went to Italy, and took refuge at the court of the Duchess René of Ferrara, who made him her secretary; and Clement himself, who had already had more than one encounter with the law, for his hatred of all constraint and not for his faith, got frightened also, and accompanied his friend beyond the Alps.

Side by side with these noblemen and servants of the king were found more lowly men on every road in France. The trades connected with typography (printers, booksellers, and binders) formed the most numerous contingent in these bands of fugitives. The Reformation had gained many followers among the masters and their workmen, and it was sufficient to have printed, bound, or sold any of Luther's works,

to be burnt alive. Master Simon Dubois, John Nicole, the Balafre (the surname alone has come down to us)—all of them printers, were in flight. Andrew Vincard, the bookseller; Cholin and Jerome Denis, master-binders; and one Barbe d' Orge, furbisher of books to the court, had disappeared. Master goldsmiths, engravers; John Le Feuvre, a cutter of block-books (he may perhaps have cut certain designs representing Christ and Antichrist, which had been distributed along with the placards); a cooper, a carpenter, a shoemaker; Girard Lenet, a painter; John Pinot, who kept an inn, called the *Key*, on the Grève, notorious for lodging Lutherans; the sister of the paralytic Milon, who could not bear to remain in the city where her brother had been burnt—all these were flying far from Paris.\*

Dauphiny was the province of France which had contributed most to the evangelical brotherhood of Paris. Master Thomas Berberin, Pasqualis, François, Gaspard Charnel, and a young friar named Loys de Laval, were all from Dauphiny, and returned hastily to their picturesque home.

Several other fugitives were monks: there were brother Gratian and brother Richard, both Augustines; brother Nicholas Marcel, a Celestine; the precentor Jehannet, surnamed *the preacher*; and Master John le Rentif, a secular priest, popularly known as the *prêcheur de bracque*,† so called, probably, because having thrown off his sacerdotal gown, he preached in breeches. In this fugitive flock there was one black

\* *Chronique du Roi François I.* pp. 130–132.

† The breeches-preacher; comp. Italian *brache*.

sheep, the famous doctor of divinity, Peter Caroli. The Sorbonne had stopped his lectures at the college of Cambray for having said: 'Nothing keeps us more from the knowledge of God than images; and it is better to give sixpence to the poor than to a priest for a mass.' He left for Switzerland, where his presence was not very highly appreciated. 'At that time also went out Caroli,' says Beza, 'carrying with him the same spirit of ambition, of contradiction, and of lewdness; a man whom the spirit of God had not sent, but whom Satan had brought to hinder the Lord's work.'

The colleges, also, where the evangelical light was beginning to illuminate some of the masters and pupils, supplied several fugitives. Professors on whom the severity of parliament would have fallen, rose up, bade farewell to their pupils, sorrowfully went out of their studies, and disappeared. Master John Renault, principal of a college at Tournay; Master Mederic Sevin; Master Mathurin Cordier, Calvin's mentor and friend, had quitted Paris in haste, without taking leave of their colleagues. All classes of society had furnished representatives to that body which was hurrying from the capital along every road. These noble Christians were often treated ignominiously in their flight: many had pity on them, but others insulted them. They were sometimes obliged to hide themselves in stables or in the woods; worn out by poverty and hunger, clothed in 'coarse and dirty garments,' the better to elude their enemies; but the peace of faith consoled them; they had been unwilling to deny Christ; they had preferred, as Calvin says, to renounce the life of this world to live

for ever in heaven, and the hope of a glorious resurrection prevented them from fainting.\*

Margaret shed many tears in secret, and her silent sorrow spoke eloquently to her brother. Presently she risked a few prayers in behalf of her friends, Roussel, Courault, and Berthaud. The king was still irritated against them; but the love he felt for his sister prevailed. He ordered the three doctors to be taken out of prison and put in a convent: the dungeon was changed to a cell, which was some slight relief; and a sharp reprimand was given to each of them. Roussel declared that he had no desire to break with the Church, and retired to his abbey at Clairac.† The feeble Berthaud, whom the punishments had frightened, resumed his monastic dress without any reserve, and died in the cloister; but the aged and intrepid Courault remained firm. In vain did the king send him back to the convent; in vain was the monk's frock put on him, and a chaplet in his hands; he kept silent, but at the first opportunity, some days only after he had been sent to the cloister, he escaped, and, although almost blind, took the road which Farel and Calvin had already trodden, and reached Basle.

This pardon, almost a disgrace to the king who granted it, was the only and the last expression of Francis's pity; after having given way to his sister, he gave way to the courtiers, the cardinals, the Sor-

\* The list of those who were noted by the officers of justice as having fled from Paris, of which the Bourgeois de Paris speaks in his *Journal*, p. 446, is given more completely in the *Chronique de François I.* pp. 130–132.

† *dus Rufus . . . decreto regio absolutus.*—Cop to Bucer, Stras-  
b.



bonne, and parliament. The king's indulgence to the three doctors served but to hasten the terrible persecutions that were about to begin in France. The people, especially at Paris, ignorant and superstitious, and not imagining there could be any other religion than that which they had been taught, were astonished, disturbed, and uneasy at seeing the great number of men and women won to the Gospel; they were even touched by the serenity of the martyrs. The chiefs of the ultramontane party, alarmed at the agitation which was gradually spreading all over the capital, and desirous of strengthening the faith of the masses, began to solicit the king very earnestly. They reminded him of the paper against the mass, and called for severer punishments and more striking satisfaction; they represented to him that 'the inhabitants of Paris were much disturbed by the multitude of those who had gone astray from the faith.'\* They seemed to see the waves of Luther's doctrine impetuously advancing from Germany, and on the point of breaking over France. At all risks a dyke must be raised up sufficient to stop them. 'Sire,' they said, 'transmit faithfully to your successors that glorious title of eldest son of the Church which you have received from your forefathers. . . You know how greedy the French mind is for novelties,† and where may that lead us. . . Give a public proof of your attachment to the faith.' Francis had not forgotten the placard fastened by night to the door of his chamber, and that evangelical remonstrance seemed in

\* *Chronique du Roi François I.* p. 113.

† 'Quam avido novitatis ingenio essent Galli.'—Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Hérés.* ii. p. 229.

his eyes a scandalous libel aimed at his majesty. Let there be more burnings then. . . But it is desirable that they should be accompanied with unusual pomp. By a royal law and constitution, it was ordered that they should pray to the Almighty for the destruction of heresy, and to that end there should be a solemn procession and an expiatory sacrifice. Francis intended to crown it with acts of barbarity.

All Paris was astir: the streets were hung with drapery, *reposoirs*\* were erected, the most magnificent dresses were preparing in the palace, and the victims in the dungeons were counted. Francis had many motives for giving a grand spectacle and accompanying it with bloody interludes: public policy was not without a share in them. He wished to silence the evil tongues that were raving about his friendly relations with Henry VIII. and the good grace with which he had received the ambassador from the Grand Turk; he wished to draw down the blessings of heaven upon his arms; he wished to show that if he protected sound learning, he despised fanatical writings, and detested the anonymous libels circulated at the same time as the placards, the *Seven Assaults*, the treatise *Against the pope's traffickers*, and a host of others. But the wrath that had seized him at seeing the criminal handbill on his own door, particularly called for a terrible revenge, and that without delay.

The 21st January, 1535, arrived. Early in the morning a large crowd of citizens and people from the surrounding country filled the streets; even the roofs of the houses were covered with spectators. This cu-

\* These are temporary altars set up in the streets, and at which the procession of the *Corpus Christi* halts 'to repose the Holy Sacrament.'

rious and agitated multitude still further augmented the general emotion: many citizens of Paris had never seen anything like it before. 'There was not the smallest piece of wood or stone, jutting from the walls, that was not occupied, provided there was room on it for anybody, and the streets seemed paved with human heads.' The innumerable concourse admired the tapestry with which the houses were hung, the *reposoirs*, the pictures filled with splendid mysteries. The people gathered particularly before representations of the *Holy Host*, of the *Jew* (probably the Wandering Jew), 'and others of very great singularity.' Before the door of each house was a lighted torch, 'to do reverence to the blessed sacrament and the holy relics.'\*

The procession began at six in the morning. First came all the crosses and banners of the several parishes; then followed the citizens, two and two, each with a torch, and the four mendicant orders, with the priests and canons of the city. Never had so many relics been seen before. It was not only living men who figured that day in the streets of the capital to do honour to the mass; but there were St. Philip, St. Marcel, St. Germain, St. Mery, St. Honoré, St. Landry, St. Opportuna, St. Martin, St. Magloire, and many others, who, whole or in part, were paraded before the people. The crowd regarded these ancient relics with devout admiration: 'There's the body of the saint! . . . there are his shoes and his breeches!'

Thus spoke the devout; but what effect did these superstitions produce on enlightened men? What

\* *Chronique du Roi François I.* p. 114.

would Calvin, in particular, have said, that great friend of the worship in spirit and in truth paid to God alone? He had left Paris some months since; but had he been there still, at the moment of the procession, at De la Forge's or any other house before which it passed, what would have been his feelings? These we learn from one of his writings, in which he treats of all the relics displayed at this time before the Parisians. This is the proper moment for showing what he thought of these pretended relics of saints. Irony is a weapon to be sparingly used in religious matters; we find it employed, however, more than once in the Bible, for instance where Elijah speaks to the prophets of Baal.\* Calvin might therefore make use of it; but he was not naturally given to humour, and a profound seriousness underlies his irony.

The holy bodies followed each other along the streets of the capital. The admiration of the citizens increased at every moment; they believed, as each relic passed them, that they were looking at an object unique in the world. 'The marvel is not so great,' said Calvin subsequently. 'We have not only *one* body of each of these saints, but we have *several*. There is one body of St. Matthew at Rome, a second at Padua, and a third at Treves. There is one of St. Lazarus at Marseille, another at Autun, and a third at Avallon.†

Soon the canons of the Holy Chapel came in sight, wearing their copes: no church in Christendom possessed such treasures. 'Here is the Virgin's milk!' — 'Indeed,' said Calvin, 'there is not a petty town or

\* 1 Kings xviii. 27.

† Calvin, *Opusc. franç.* pp. 750–751.



wretched convent where they do not show us this milk. If the Virgin had been nursing all her life, she would hardly have been able to supply such an abundance!’ \*

‘There is our Lord’s purple robe,’ said the people; ‘and the linen cloth he tied round him at the Last Supper, and his swaddling clothes!’—‘They would do better,’ said Calvin, ‘to seek for Christ in his word, his sacraments, and spiritual graces, than in his frock, little shirt, and napkin.’ †

‘There is the crown of thorns!’ was soon the cry. The sensation produced by this venerated object was all the greater, and the struggles of the people to get near it all the stronger, because it had never before been seen in the processions.—‘It is no rarity,’ said Calvin. ‘There are two of these crowns at Rome, one at Vincennes, one at Bourges, one at Besançon, one at Albi, one at Toulouse, one at Mâcon, one at Cléry, one at St. Flour, one at St. Maximin, one at Noyon, one at St. Salvador in Spain, one at St. Jago in Galicia, and many others in other places besides. To make all these crowns and gather all these thorns, they must have cut down a whole hedge.’ ‡

‘Here comes the true cross!’ Again there was a rushing and shouting, citizens and strangers crushing one another.—‘It is not the only one,’ said the reformer, ‘there is no petty town or paltry church where they do not show you pieces; and if all were collected together, there would be a load for a great barge, and three hundred men could not carry it.’ §

Next appeared a silver-gilt shrine, which attracted

\* Calvin, *Opusc. franç.* p. 745.

† Ibid. pp. 727 and 736.

‡ Ibid. pp. 736, 742.

§ Ibid. p. 734.

universal attention: it contained the relics of St. Genevieve, the patron saint of Paris; it was the last anchor in the midst of the tempest, and was never brought out except when France was in great peril. The butchers of Paris had offered to carry this precious amulet, and had prepared themselves for it by a fast of several days: they moved along barefoot and dressed in long shirts. Around this somewhat ferocious group there was a continual movement. 'There she is, the holy virgin of Nanterre,' was the cry. 'She saved our forefathers from the fury of Attila, may she save us from Luther's!' The people threw themselves upon the relic: one wished to touch it with his cap, another with his handkerchief, a third with the tip of his finger, some even more daring tried to kiss it. *Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little.\**

After the relics came a great number of cardinals, archbishops, and bishops, with coped and mitred abbots. Then, under a magnificent canopy, the four pillars of which were borne by the king's three sons and the Duke of Vendome, first prince of the blood, came the host carried by the bishop of Paris, and adorned as if it had been the Lord in person.

Then appeared Francis I., without parade, bare-headed and on foot, holding a lighted taper in his hand,† like a penitent commissioned to expiate the sacrilege of his people. At each *reposoir* he gave his taper to the Cardinal of Lorraine, joined his hands and knelt down, humbling himself, not for his adulteries, his lies, or his false oaths—of these he did not think—but for the audacity of those who did not like

\* Psalms ii. 12.

† Garnier, *Hist. de France*, xxiv. p. 556.

the mass. He was followed by the queen, the princes and princesses, the foreign ambassadors and all the court, the chancellor of France, the council, the parliament in their scarlet robes, the university, the other corporations, and the guard. All walked two and two, 'exhibiting every mark of extraordinary piety.' Each man carried a lighted torch in profound silence. Spiritual songs and funereal airs alone interrupted from time to time the quiet of this gloomy and slow procession.

In this way it traversed the different quarters of the capital, followed by an immense crowd of people, and the inhabitants of each street, standing in front of their houses, fell on their knees as the host went by. The crowd was so great that bodies of archers, with white staves in their hands, posted in every street, could scarcely keep open a passage for the procession.\*

At length they arrived at the church of Notre Dame; the sacrament was placed on the altar; mass was sung by the Bishop of Paris, and all imaginable homage was paid to the host in order to atone for the insults offered to it by the placards. From Notre Dame, the king and the princes returned to the bishop's palace.

There are days of evil omen in history. There is one especially that it is sufficient to name to fill the mind with sorrow and mourning . . . fatal date which solemnly inaugurated in France the epoch of persecution and martyrdom. On the *twenty-first of*

\* 'Innumera denique plebis multitudine.'—Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Hérés.* ii. p. 229. See also the *Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris*; Fontaine, *Hist. Catholique*; Maimbourg, *Hist. du Calvinisme*; and the *Chronique de François I.*

*January*, 1535, a king of France, surrounded by his court and ministers, his parliament and clergy, was about to devote to death with all due ceremony the humble disciples of the Gospel. What the Valois began, the Bourbons continued, and the most illustrious of them carried out on a vast scale the system of galleys and of burning piles. Alas! there are dates which coincide in a striking and pitiless manner. Four hundred and fifty-eight years later there was another *twenty-first of January*. The simplest, the meekest, the most generous of the Bourbons, condemned by misguided men to suffer death, ascended the scaffold erected in a public place in Paris; he received the death-blow on the *twenty-first of January*, 1793. We do not presume to explain history; we do not say that the innocent Louis XVI. paid the penalty of his predecessor's crimes, and that God ordained the expiation commanded by Francis I. to be followed by another. But the coincidence of these two dates startled us, and we could not avoid stopping to contemplate them with a holy fear.



## CHAPTER XII.

## THE ELOQUENCE AND TORTURES OF FRANCIS I.

(21ST JANUARY 1535.)

ALL was not over: they had had the comedy (as it appeared to some); they were now to have the oratorical address, and then the tragedy. In order to stifle the Reformation, something more was wanted than relics, chanting, and images: blood must be shed. But first of all there should be a speech from the throne. We do not doubt the sincerity of the king in his oratorical movements. The personal offence that had been done to him, and the obstacles raised by the placards to his political plans, most assuredly engrossed him more than the cause of Catholicism; but all this was mixed up in his mind, and he was eloquent. The ambassadors,\* the court, the parliament, the Bishop of Paris attended by the most distinguished of his clergy, the rector of the university with his principal doctors, the provost of the merchants, the sheriffs, and a great number of the leading officers and merchants of the city had received orders to assemble after dinner in the bishop's great

\* The *Chronique de François I.* p. 121, mentions among the ambassadors those of the emperor, of the King of England, of Venice, and of other princes, lordships, cities, marquises, counts, and barons of Germany, Italy, and elsewhere.

hall. They expected a speech from the king, an event of no frequent occurrence in those times, which made them all the more impatient. Ere long Francis I. entered: his countenance was serious, sad, and even gloomy. His children, the other princes of the blood, the cardinals and great officers of state surrounded the throne, whence the king could be seen and heard by the whole assembly. He took his seat and said: \* ‘Messieurs, be not surprised if you do not see in my face that look which is usual to me, and that joy which animates me whenever I meet you. Do not marvel if the tricks of eloquence are foreign to my speech. I do not come to talk to you of myself; we have to treat this day of an offence done to the King of kings. It is proper that I should assume another style and language, another look and countenance, for I do not speak to you as a king and a master speaks to his subjects and his servants, but as being a subject and servant myself, and addressing those who are fellow-servants with me of our common King, of the Master of masters, who is God Almighty. What honour, what reverence, what obedience do we not owe to that great King! . . . What obligations does not this kingdom, more than any other, owe to Him, seeing that for thirteen or fourteen hundred years He has maintained it in peace and tranquillity with its friends, and in victory against its enemies! And if, sometimes, for sins committed against His divine goodness, He has wished to visit us with punishment in

\* This speech of which Theodore Beza and Mezeray speak in their histories is found in the *Chronique de François I.*, published by Guiffrey in 1860, and the Registers of the Hôtel de Ville quite bear out the *Chronique*.

temporal things, He has done it with so little severity, that He has never exceeded the chastisement which a kind and gracious father may use towards the faults of a humble and obedient son. But as for spiritual things, which touch the Holy Catholic faith, God has never forsaken France so far as to let her stray ever so little from it; and He has shown her this favour, that, by common accord, she has enjoyed the privilege of being the only power that has never nurtured monsters, and which, above all others, bears the name and title of Most Christian. . . So much the more ought we to feel grief and regret in our hearts, that there should be at this time in France men so wicked and wretched as to desire to soil that noble name,—men who have disseminated damnable opinions, who have not only assaulted the things which our great King desires to be honoured, and acted so evilly that they do not leave to others the power of doing worse, but have all at once attacked Him in the holy sacrament of the altar. People of low condition, and less learning, wicked blasphemers, have used with regard to that sacrament, terms rejected and abhorred by every other nation. So that our realm, and even this good city of Paris, which from the time when letters were transported hither from Athens, has always shone in sound and holy learning, might remain scandalised, and its light be obscured. . . Wherefore we have commanded that severe punishment be inflicted on the delinquents, in order that they may be an example to others, and prevent them from falling into the like damnable opinions. And we entreat the misguided ones to return into the path of the Holy Catholic faith, in which I, who am their king, with the spiritual prelates and temporal

princes, persevere. . . Oh! the crime, the blasphemy, the day of sorrow and disgrace! Why did it ever dawn upon us?’

‘There were few of all the company,’ says the chronicle, ‘from whose eyes the king did not draw tears.’ After a few minutes’ silence, interrupted by the exclamations and sighs of the assembly, the king resumed: ‘It is at least a consolation that you share my sorrow. What a disgrace it will be if we do not extirpate these wicked creatures! . . . For this reason I have summoned you to beg you to put out of your hearts all opinions that may mislead you; to instruct your children and your servants in the Christian doctrine of the Catholic faith; and if you know any person infected by this perverse sect, be he your parent, brother, cousin, or connection, give information against him. By concealing his misdeeds, you will be partakers of that pestilent faction.’ The assembly gave numerous signs of assent; the king saw the devotion, zeal, and affection visible in their faces. ‘I give thanks to God,’ he resumed, ‘that the greatest, the most learned, and undoubtedly the majority of my subjects, and especially in this good city of Paris, are full of zeal for the Catholic religion.’ Then, says the chronicle, you might have seen the faces of the spectators change in appearance, and give signs of joy; acclamations prevented the sighs, and sighs choked the acclamations. ‘I warn you,’ continued the king, ‘that I will have the said errors expelled and driven from my kingdom, and will excuse no one.’ Then he exclaimed, says our historian, with extreme anger: ‘As true, Messieurs, as I am your king, if I knew one of my own limbs spotted or



infected with this detestable rottenness, I would give it you to cut off. . . And further, if I saw one of my children defiled by it, I would not spare him. . . I would deliver him up myself, and would sacrifice him to God.'\*

At these words the king stopped: he was agitated and wept. The spectators, affected by the sight of this new Abraham, burst into tears. After the interruption necessarily occasioned by this moving scene, Du Bellay, bishop of Paris, and John Tronson, Lord of Couldray on the Seine and prevost of the merchants, approached, and kneeling before the king, thanked him for his zeal—the first in the name of the clergy, the other on behalf of the citizens—and swore to make war against heresy. Thereupon all the spectators exclaimed, with voices broken by sobbing: 'We will live and die for the Catholic religion.' The author of the *Chronicle of Francis I.*, who was probably present in the assembly, dwells upon the emotion caused by the monarch's address: 'We may clearly show by this,' he says, 'that the speech of an eloquent and powerful man may lead men's hearts at his will; for there was not a man in all the company, whether native or foreigner, who did not more than once change countenance, according to the different affections the words expressed.'†

Other emotions, those of anguish and terror, were next to be aroused. After displaying his eloquence, the king was about to display his cruelty. 'Francis, always in extremes,' says a very catholic historian,‡

\* *Chronique du Roi François I.* p. 125.

† Ibid. p. 126.

‡ Garnier, *Hist. de France*, xxiv. p. 540.

‘did not disdain to pollute his eyes with a spectacle full of barbarity and horror.’ On the road between St. Genevieve and the Louvre, two scaffolds had been prepared, one at the Marksman’s Cross in the Rue St. Honoré, and the other at the Halles. Some of the most excellent men that France possessed were about to be burnt after suffering atrocious tortures. Altars, galleries, and inscriptions had been placed on the bridges and in the streets. On the bridge of Notre Dame, around a fountain, surmounted by a large crucifix, these lines were inscribed:

Ipsi peribunt, tu autem permanebis. (Ps. cii.)  
 Inimicos ejus induam confusione. (Ps. cxxxii.)  
 Videbunt in quem transfixerunt. (John xix.) \*

A little farther on stood an altar with an invocation to the Virgin and all the saints to give help, strength, and grace against the attacks of the enemies of the host. In other places were four stanzas in French, each of which ended with this line:

France florit sur toutes nations.†

The king with his family, the nobles, and the rest of the procession, having resumed his march, made his first halt at the Marksman’s Cross. Morin, the cruel lieutenant-criminal, then brought forward three evangelical christians destined to be burnt ‘to appease the wrath of God.’ They were the excellent Valeton, receiver of Nantes; Master Nicholas, clerk to the registrar of the Châtelet, and another.‡ The people

\* ‘They shall perish, but thou shalt endure.’—‘His enemies will I clothe with shame.’—‘They shall look on him whom they pierced.’

† ‘France flourishes above all nations.’

‡ *Journal d’un Bourgeois de Paris*, p. 447.

were so excited by the procession, and by the cries raised in every quarter, and even by the throne, against the reformers, that, when the martyrs appeared, they rushed furiously upon them to snatch them from the hangman's hands, and tear them to pieces. The guard drove them back, and the disciples of the Gospel were preserved for a more frightful death.

The first who came forward was that brave man and respectable Christian, Nicholas Valetton, who had always 'kept good company.' The king had been struck with the circumstance of the hiding of his books, and ordered them to be burnt with him. Valetton stood in front of the pile. With a sort of refined cruelty, the wood with which he was to be burnt had been taken from his own house; but this kind of irony did not affect him. Another object attracted his attention: it was a kind of gallows, formed of two poles, one fixed firmly in the ground, the other fastened to it cross-wise, one end of which was raised at will by means of a cord fastened to the other. The receiver looked calmly at this instrument of punishment, to which they were about to fasten him to make him soar into the air. Merely to burn these humble Christians would have been too simple: the employment of the *strappado* was to provide the people with a more varied and more diverting spectacle. The priests knowing that Valetton was a man of credit, and that he was moreover rather a novice in heresy, desired to gain him: they approached him and said: 'We have the universal Church with us, out of it there is no salvation; return to it, your faith is destroying you.' This faithful Christian replied: 'I only believe in what

the prophets and the apostles formerly preached, and what all the company of saints believed.' The attacks were renewed in vain. 'My faith has a confidence in God,' he said, 'which will resist all the powers of hell.' The good people who were scattered among the crowd admired his firmness,\* and the thought that he left a bereaved wife behind him touched many a heart.

The punishment began. The hangman bound his hands which he fastened to the end of the strappado; the sufferer was then raised in the air, his arms alone sustaining the whole weight of his body. The pile over which he was suspended was then set alight, and they proceeded to their cruel sport. The executioners let the unhappy Valetton fall plump into the midst of the flames; then, reversing their movements, they raised the martyr into the air only to let him fall again into the fire.† 'Make the wretches feel that they are dying,' a cruel pagan emperor had said; a king of France carried out this order, and enjoyed it with all his court, somewhat as savages do when they burn their prisoners. After several turns at this atrocious sport had amused the king, the priests, the nobles, and the people, the flames caught hold of the martyr from his feet to the cord that bound his hands, the knot was burnt, and this upright witness to Christ fell into the fire where his body was reduced to ashes. This inhuman punishment was next applied by order of the *most christian* king to the two other martyrs. When the torture had lasted long enough, the executioner cut the rope, if the fire had not consumed

\* Crespin, *Martyrol.* fol. 113 verso.

† 'Ad machinam alligati et in altum sublatis, deinde in ignem e sublimi dimissi, et rursum adducti.'—Sleidanus, fol. 136.



it, in order that the victim might fall at last into the flames.\*

Francis I. and his courtiers were not yet satisfied. 'To the Halles! to the Halles!' was the cry, and a mass of curious people rushed thither, knowing that the executioners had prepared a second entertainment of a similar kind. The king and his train had scarcely arrived, when they began to set the frightful strappado in motion. A man known and highly esteemed throughout the quarter, a rich fruit-merchant of the Halles, had been fastened to it, and after him two other evangelical Christians were served in the same way. Francis and his court witnessed the convulsions of the sufferers and could smell the stench of their burning flesh. There were, no doubt, among the spectators many individuals feeling for the sufferings of others, but, surprising to say, there was not a sign of compassion: the best of them suppressed the most legitimate emotions. It was everybody's duty to think that, as a jesuit says, 'the king wished to draw down the blessing of heaven, by giving this signal example of piety and zeal.'†

Francis returned satisfied to the Louvre: the courtiers around him declared that the triumph of holy Church was for ever secured in the kingdom of France. But the people went still farther; they displayed a cruel joy; the deaths of the heretics had furnished them with an unknown enjoyment. . . It was long before the thirst for blood then awakened in them was assuaged. They had just played the first act of a

\* 'Carnifice demum abscondente funem, in subjectam flammam corruébant.'—Sleidanus, fol. 136.

† L. P. Daniel, *Hist. de France*, v. p. 654.

drama which was to be followed by others bloodier still, the most notorious of which were the massacres of St. Bartholomew, and, with a change of victims, the massacres of September 1792. Certain enraptured clerks thought that Francis I. surpassed Charles V., and exclaimed :

Cæsar edit edicta, Rex edit supplicia.\*

Francis I. and his officers felt, however, some little vexation : certain victims were wanting. They sought everywhere for nobles, professors, priests, and industrials suspected of protestantism, whom they could not find. A few days after these executions, on the 25th January, the sound of the trumpet was heard in all the cross-ways, and the common crier 'cited seventy-three Lutherans to appear in person. In default thereof, they were declared to be banished from the kingdom of France, their goods confiscated, and themselves condemned to be burnt.' These were the fugitives whom we have already pointed out. None of them appeared to the summons ; but one of them wrote to the king : †

They call me Lutheran—a name  
I have no right to bear.  
Luther for me did not come down from heaven ;  
For me no Luther hung upon the cross  
For all my sins ; nor was I in his name  
Baptised, but in the name of Him alone  
To whom th' eternal Father grants whate'er we ask—  
The only name in heaven by which the world,  
This wicked world, salvation can attain.

But the king was far from pardoning. Four days

\* 'The Emperor issues edicts, the King punishes.'—Ribier, *Lettres d'Etat*, i. p. 358.

† Clement Marot, *Épître au Roi*.

after this publication (29th January) he issued an edict, 'for the extirpation of the Lutheran sect which has swarmed and is still swarming in the realm, with orders to denounce its followers.'\* At the same time he addressed a circular letter to all the parliaments, enjoining them to give 'aid and prisons' in order that the heresy should be promptly extirpated.† Lastly, the 'father of letters' issued an ordinance declaring the *abolition of printing* all over France under pain of the gallows.‡ This savage edict was not carried out: it is, however, an index of the spirit by which the enemies of the Reformation were animated.

Francis I., after having thus made some excursions into the sphere of Charles V.—the *proclamations*, returned into his own—the *punishments*. Du Bellay interceded for the German protestants, and the king sent them back to their own country; but, feeling his hands free as regarded his own subjects, he sent fresh victims to the stake. On the 16th February, Calvin's friend, the rich and pious trader, La Forge, about sixty years of age, was dragged in a tumbril to the cemetery of St. John. 'He is a rich man,' said some compassionate spectators; 'a good man that has given away much in alms.' It did not matter: they burnt him alive. Three days later a goldsmith and a painter were mercifully (for Francis wished to see the arts flourish) stripped and flogged, deprived of their goods, and banished. Many Lutheran women were banished

\* Isambert, *Anciennes Lois*, xii. p. 402.

† This circular will be found in the *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire du Protestantisme français*, i. p. 328.

‡ Sismondi, *Hist. des Français*, xvi. p. 455. See also Garnier, Rœderer, &c.

also. On the 26th February, a young Italian, named Loys de Medicis, perished in the flames at the end of St. Michael's bridge; and his wife 'died in her bed of grief at such infamy.' Shortly afterwards it was the turn of a scholar, a native of Grenoble, who had posted up some of the placards in the night. On the 13th March, it was that of the chorister of the royal chapel who in his rash zeal had fastened the protest to his Majesty's door; he was burnt near the Louvre. On the 5th May, a *procureur* and a tailor were dragged on a hurdle to the porch of Notre Dame, whence they were taken in a tumbril to the pig-market 'and there hanged in chains,' which were not consumed so soon as ropes. The same day, a shoemaker of Tournay, banished from that city because he belonged to the sect of Luther, died in a similar way, 'without repenting.'

About the same time two journeymen, natives of Tours, and ribbon weavers, arrived in Paris 'from Almayne,' bringing with them a Lutheran book. 'Landlord,' said one of them imprudently, 'take care of this book while we go into town, and do not show it to anybody.' The innkeeper whose curiosity was thus aroused, turned the book round and round, tried to read it, and at last, unable to hold out any longer, went and showed it to a priest. The latter having opened it, exclaimed: 'It is a damnable book!' The landlord informed against the travellers; Morin had the two friends arrested . . . their tongues were cut out, and they were burnt 'alive and contumacious.'\*

Paris did not enjoy alone these cruel spectacles:

\* *Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris*, p. 451.



piles were kindled in many cities of France. A poor girl, Mary Becaudelle, surnamed the Gaborite, had just returned to Essarts in Vendée, her native place, after being in service at Rochelle with a master who had taught her the Gospel. A grey-friar happened to be preaching in her little town and she went to hear him. After the sermon, she said to him: 'Father, you do not preach the Word of God,' and pointed it out to him. Ashamed at being taken to task by a woman, the friar, who was alone, resolved to get himself reprimanded a second time, but before witnesses. The plot was arranged. The friar having insulted the doctrine of grace, the terrified Gaborite exclaimed: 'If you insult the Gospel, the wrath of God will be against you.' She was condemned to the stake shortly after, and 'endured her punishment with such patience as to cause great admiration.' \*

About the same time two or three men were keeping watch, during the night, in the chapel of the Holy Candle, at Arras in Artois. There was a candle there, to which the devout used to sing hymns, because the priests told them that it had been sent from heaven and was never consumed. 'That is what we will see,' said these evangelicals: Nicholas, surnamed the *Penman*, 'a man of good sense and well taught in holy learning,' Jean de Pois and Stephen Bourlet, 'who had both received much instruction from Nicholas.' One day they took their station round the candle, determined not to fall asleep. The substitution generally effected by the adepts at night, while the doors were closed, not having been made, on account

\* Crespin, *Martyrol*, fol. 114.

of these inquisitive men, the perpetual candle came to an end and went out, like any other candle. Then Nicholas and his friends calling in 'the poor idolaters,' showed them that there was nothing left of their heaven-descended relic but the end of a burnt-out wick. 'As the reward of their discovery these three Christians received the crown of martyrdom together.'\*

The persecution spared no one. It was often sufficient for an enemy to accuse a person of having a liking for the Gospel, when immediately the police laid their hands on him. This was not the king's intention: he had ordered that the judges should inquire whether 'enmity, pique, or revenge gave rise to false accusations;' but the magistrates were not so scrupulous. The terror was universal. 'One sees nothing in Paris,' said a catholic eye-witness, 'but gibbets set up in various places, which surely terrify the people of the said Paris, and those of other places who also see gallowses and executions.'† Mezeray, while describing these events, says: 'But for ten that were put to death, a hundred others sprang up from their ashes.'‡

The enemies of the Reformation, feeling that the moment was decisive, redoubled their efforts to destroy it. The French, save a certain numerous class submissive to the clergy, were disposed to receive it. They went to church, indeed, but the majority of the population would willingly have embraced a religion in which the priest did not interpose between man and God. 'Alas!' said the more fervent, 'if the

\* Crespin, *Martyrol.* fol. 113 verso et fol. 114.

† *Chronique du Roi François I.* p. 129.

‡ Mezeray, *Hist. de France*, ad ann. 1535.

king does not interfere to save the Church, all the warmth of the French for the catholic religion will soon be turned into ice.'\*

The king had a special motive in supporting popery. A striking transformation was going on in France as well as in other parts of Europe; limited monarchy was changing into absolute monarchy. Francis I. thought that men who set God above the king, and died rather than invert the order of these two powers, were very dangerous to despotism, and he swore that, though he courted this religion without his kingdom, he would crush it within. Alas! the task was but too easy. Many were only superficially gained. Nobles without high-mindedness or independence; men of letters who jeered at obscurantism, but who had not tasted the Gospel; ignorant and timid crowds turned their backs upon the Word of God when the flames of the burning piles rose into the air.

Terror spread through the ranks of the friends of the Reformation. Sturm, who was deeply engaged with literature and philosophy, broken-hearted at the sight of all these woes, abandoned his labours. Many of the martyrs were his friends, and had eaten at his table. Dejected, disturbed in the midst of the lessons he gave at the Royal College (which the celebrated Ramus attended), having constantly before his eyes the murderous flames which had reduced to ashes those whom he loved, it seemed to him that barbarism was about to extinguish the torch of learning, and once more overrun society, hardly awakened from its long sleep. He condemned the placards; in his

\* 'Gallorum ardorem erga catholicam religionem in glaciem abiturum fuisse.'—Flor, Rémond, *Hist. Hérés.* ii. p. 230.

opinion, the Reformation should make its way by a learned exposition of its doctrines, and not by attacking popular superstitions; but at the sight of the punishments, he thought only of the victims. He turned towards Germany where he had so many friends, where there was possibly less decision than in France, but a deeper and more inward faith; he thought of Melanchthon, sat down at his desk, and as if he were in the presence of that tender-hearted man, poured all his sorrows into his bosom. 'If the letters which I have sometimes written you on the affairs of this country have been agreeable to you,' he said, 'if you then desired that all should go well for good men,—oh! what uneasiness, what anxiety, must not your heart feel in this hour of furious tempests and extreme danger!\*' We were in the best, the finest position, thanks to wise men; and now behold us, through the advice of unskilful men, fallen into the greatest calamity and supreme misery. I wrote you last year that everything was going on well, and what hopes we entertained from the king's equity. We congratulated one another; but alas! extravagant men have deprived us of those propitious times. One night in the month of October, in a few moments, all over France, and in every corner, they posted with their own hands a placard concerning the ecclesiastical orders, the mass, and the eucharist—one would think they were rehearsing a tragedy†—they carried their audacity so far as to fasten one even on the door of the king's

\* 'In turbulentissimis maximeque periculosis tempestatibus.'—*Corp. Ref.* ii. p. 855.

† The meaning of the Latin is not very clear: 'Et tragicis exclamationibus.'



apartments, wishing by this means, as it would seem, to cause certain and atrocious dangers. Since that rash act, everything has been changed; the people are troubled, the thoughts of many are filled with alarm, the magistrates are irritated, the king is excited, and frightful trials are going on. It must be acknowledged that these imprudent men, if they were not the cause, were at least the occasion of this. Only, if it were possible for the judges to preserve a just mean! Some, having been seized, have already undergone their punishment; others, promptly providing for their safety, have fled; innocent people have suffered the chastisement of the guilty. Informers show themselves publicly; any one may be both accuser and witness.\* These are not idle rumours that I write to you, Melanchthon; be assured that I do not tell you all, and that in what I write I do not employ the strong terms that the terrible state of our affairs would require. Already eighteen disciples of the Gospel have been burnt, and the same danger threatens a still greater number. Every day the danger spreads wider and wider.† There is not a good man who does not fear the calumnies of informers, and is not consumed with grief at the sight of these horrible doings. Our adversaries reign, and with all the more authority, that they appear to be fighting in a just cause, and to quell sedition. In the midst of these great and numerous evils there is only one hope left—that the people are beginning to be disgusted with such cruel persecutions, and that the king blushes at last at

\* 'Cuilibet simul et testi et accusatori in hac causa esse licet.'—*Corp. Ref.* ii. p. 856.

† 'Serpunt quotidie latius pericula.'—*Ibid.*

having thirsted for the blood of these unfortunate men. The persecutors are instigated by violent hatred and not by justice. If the king could but know what kind of spirit animates these bloodthirsty men, he would no doubt take better advice. And yet we do not despair. God reigns, he will scatter all these tempests, he will show us the port where we can take refuge, he will give good men an asylum *where they will dare speak their thoughts freely.*’\*

This letter to Melanchthon is important in the history of the Reformation. Liberty of speech and of religious action is what protestantism claimed in France; and in claiming these liberties for itself, it secured them for all. We may imagine what an impression this letter produced at Wittemberg. Melanchthon, who received it, and even Luther himself, blamed a certain excess of vivacity in the French reformers; but, like Sturm, they recognised in them disciples of the Divine Word. A few days after, Luther writing to his friend Link, complained of the evil times in which they lived, and especially of the kings. ‘With the exception of our prince (the Elector of Saxony),’ he said, ‘there is not one whom I do not suspect. You may understand by this language how little love and zeal for the Word of God there is in this world. For the present, sing, I pray you, this psalm: *Expectans expectavi Dominum*, I waited patiently for the Lord. It is through glory and disgrace, through stumblings and strayings, through the righteous and the wicked, through devils and angels, that we come to Him who alone is good, alone is without

\* ‘Qui aliquando libere quod cogitant audebunt dicere.’—*Corp. Ref.* ii. p. 857.

evil.\* Therefore, dear brother, I conjure you lend no ear to any discourse, and have no other conversation than what you have with *Him*. There are many excellent people among men, but alas! they have less patience than stern justice. God help us! . . . He permits the devil to be strong, and how weak he makes us! God puts us to the proof. To trust in a man, were he even a prince, is not conformable with piety; but to fear a man is shameful and even impious in a Christian. May Christ, our life, our salvation, and our glory, be with you and all yours!' Luther did not name Francis I. in this letter, but it is well known that of all princes the king of France was the one in whom he had the least hope. He was not mistaken.

From this time Francis I. no longer showed the same favour to learning, and especially to evangelical learning. The excommunication launched against Henry VIII., the schism which followed, the hope of seeing Paul III. embroiled with Charles V., and other motives besides, made him incline once more towards Rome. But the placards were the principal cause of this change. His wrath was unappeasable; he was determined to abolish these new doctrines which were paraded even on the gate of his palace. His indignation broke out in the midst of his courtiers and cardinals, bishops and councillors of parliament. Nay more, he laid it even before the protestant princes of Germany. Writing to them on the 15th February, he said: 'The enemy of truth has stirred up certain people who are not fools but madmen, and who have incurred the guilt of sedition and other antichristian

\* 'Per gloriam et ignominiam . . . per diabolos et angelos.'—Lutheri *Epp.* iv. p. 603.

actions. I am determined to crush these new doctrines; and to check this disease, which leads to frightful revolts, from spreading further. No one has been spared whatever his country or his rank.'\*

Such were the king's intentions. Protestantism, and with it liberty, perished in France, but God was mighty to raise them up again.

\* Rex Galliæ ad principes protestantium. We have only the German translation of this letter. *Corp. Ref.* ii. p. 834.



## CHAPTER XIII.

CALVIN AT STRASBURG, WITH ERASMUS, AND AT BASLE.

(SUMMER AND AUTUMN, 1534.)

WHILE evangelical light seemed on the point of extinction in France, one of her sons was going to kindle a torch on the banks of the Rhine, and afterwards on those of the Rhone, which would spread its bright rays far and wide. Calvin had arrived at Strasburg.

He who was to be the true doctor of the Reformation, its great captain, was then in search of knowledge and of arms in order to teach and to fight: this, as we have said, was the principal motive that induced him to leave France. Like all noble characters who have played an important part in history, Calvin felt his vocation. He wished to labour at the renewal of the Church; and in order to do this, he must interpret Holy Scripture, and explain the body of Christian doctrine. Hitherto he had preached the Gospel like an ordinary believer; he had sown the Word in a few insulated fields—at Orleans, Bourges, Angoulême, Noyon, and Paris; now (without his being conscious of it) a wider sphere was opening before him; and he was going to learn the truth of Christ's declaration: *the field is the world*. There was a void space in Christendom, and God called him to fill it.

He was to create the new, the living theology of modern times. France, where scholasticism was the only theological science, did not suffice him; he was going towards Germany and Switzerland, where the love and study of holy learning had arisen with power. He saw from afar the lights that sparkled on the banks of the Rhine, and on the plains of Saxony; and, like a traveller who catches sight of a beacon in the midst of the darkness, he hurried towards the places whence those distant rays reached his eye. A child of light, he was seeking the light.

The free city of Strasburg possessed an intelligent middle-class and wise magistrates. The revival of learning had begun there in the fifteenth century; shortly after Luther had published his theses at Wittemberg, the echo of the great reformer's voice was heard in that city of the Rhine. Elementary schools were immediately established; monks who had left their convents, and priests who were disenchanted from their ancient superstitions, aided by pious and devout artizans, undertook the education of the children. A Latin college was founded in 1524, where the canons of St. Thomas and other learned Christians had begun a superior kind of instruction. The new life then spreading through the Church, circulated vigorously in Strasburg; it fermented in a more especial manner in Capito, Bucer, and Hedio. They conversed together, communicating to each other the faith by which they were animated: it was the spring sap pushing forth blossoms and giving promise of fruit. Capito eloquently expounded the books of the Old Testament; Bucer explained those of the New with much wisdom; Hedio taught

history and theology; Caselius, Hebrew; and Herlin, the art of speaking. Professor John Sturm, then at Paris, and the friend of Melanchthon, was about to be put at the head of the educational work in his native city.\*

There was a pious man at Strasburg, whose house was known to all Christian travellers, and especially to the exiles. He was Matthew Zell, pastor of the church of St. Lawrence. When Calvin and Du Tillet arrived in the capital of Alsace, they were in great distress, having been robbed of their money as we have seen. In this imperial city with all its beautiful buildings, over which soars the magnificent cathedral, they knew not where to go. The name of Zell was familiar to Calvin, as well as his generous hospitality; he knocked at his door, we are told, and was cordially received. Calvin and Zell were very different characters; but they appreciated each other, and when the reformer was settled at Geneva, he did not neglect to salute Zell in his letters to Bucer.† Zell was a man of practical and conciliatory spirit, and did not trouble himself much with theological discussions; he cared only for his dear parishioners, and was very popular. Bucer thought even too much so. ‘Matthew alone has the people with him,’ he said.‡ To this day his name is mentioned with affection in Alsace.

As early as 1521 he preached the Gospel at Strasburg, and with such unction and zeal, that an immense

\* Schmidt, *Jean Sturm*, ch. iii.

† Calvin to Bucer, 150 et. 1541.

‡ ‘Matthias qui solus adhuc populum habet.’ — Bucerus Blauerero, 18th Jan. 1534.

crowd surrounded his pulpit. Being a man of generous disposition, he boldly defended those who were called heretics: 'Do you know why they are attacked?' he said, 'because their enemies are afraid that the indulgences and purgatory which they condemn will bring them in no more money.'\* Prosecuted by his bishop in 1523, he defended himself with spirit,† and escaped with losing his post of confessor to the prelate.

Calvin and Du Tillet soon noticed his partner, Catherine Schulz, daughter of a carpenter in the city, a clever, intelligent, active, firm woman, who had managed to obtain the ascendant over everyone, and a little too much so over her husband. The young reformer saw in her one of the types of the Christian woman, who cumbereth herself, who receiveth the prophets honourably, but who, while doing good, sometimes values herself more highly than she does others.‡ Catherine's soul was troubled for a long time; she doubted of her salvation. At last the voice of Luther reached her, and brought her peace. 'He persuades me so thoroughly of the ineffable goodness of Jesus Christ,' she exclaimed, 'that I feel as if I were dragged from the depths of hell, and transported into the kingdom of heaven. Day and night I will now tread the path of truth.'§

From that hour Catherine resolutely dedicated herself to the practice of good works. The pastor of St.

\* Rœhrich, *Reform in Elsass*, i. p. 133.

† *Christliche Verantwortung*.

‡ Calvini *Opp*.

§ Fueslin, *Beyträge*, p. 196. Lehr, *Matth. Zell*, p. 67.



Lawrence often had a large number of persecuted christians seated round his table, and kept them in his house for many weeks. One night he received 150 pious men from a little town of Brisgau, who, having left their homes in the middle of the night, had arrived in great distress at Strasburg. Catherine found means to lodge fourscore of them in the parsonage, and for a month had fifty or sixty of them daily at her table. Even when her house was full, she displayed the most unceasing activity abroad. Caring neither for dress nor worldly recreations, the pastor's wife visited the houses of the poor, nursed the sick, wrapped the dead in their grave-clothes, comforted the prisoners, and organised collections in favour of the refugees. *She was never weary in well-doing.*

In the midst of her zeal, however, she took too much credit to herself. One day, recounting her merits, she said: 'I have conscientiously assisted my beloved Matthew in his ministry and in the management of his house. I have loved the company of the learned. I have embraced the interests of the Lord's Church. Hence all the pastors and a great number of distinguished men testify their affection and respect for me.' Catherine did not know all that these 'distinguished men' thought of her; the colour would have mounted to her cheeks could she have seen a certain letter from Bucer to Blaurer, of the 16th November 1533, in which that celebrated Strasburg doctor complains of Zell's wife, 'who is so over head and ears in love with herself;' or if that letter of the 3rd of February 1534 had been brought to her, in

which her husband's friend wrote of her: 'Catherine, like all of us, is too fond of herself.'\*

At the time of Calvin's arrival in Strasburg, Bucer was much tormented by Catherine's spirit of domination; perhaps he should have understood that her defects were but the exaggeration of her good qualities. He complained of her influence over her husband: 'Matthew Zell is certainly pious,' he said, 'but . . . he is ruled by his wife.'† Another time he said: 'He ought to preach faith more fully, more earnestly, but . . . his wife drives him to care for nothing but works.'‡ The zealous Bucer, who was so often journeying to reconcile Christians and Churches, could not endure that Zell should think only of his parish, should see nothing but his dear Strasburg, and ascribed even that to Catherine. 'Oh,' said he, 'if Matthew were but more zealous for the unity of the Church!' And yet Bucer esteemed him highly, and called him 'a God-seeking man, and of upright heart.' Zell and Catherine were in those Reformation times a Christian pair, worthy to figure in history, notwithstanding their failings. Perhaps, however, Calvin recollected Catherine's character when he reckoned patience and gentleness among the foremost qualities he should look for in a wife.§

Calvin already knew by reputation the eminent men who were living in Strasburg. He was never tired of seeing and hearing them, both at their own

\* 'Quæ furit sese amando.—Etsi amat (ut nos omnes) sua impensius.' See Roehrich, *Mittheilungen*, iii. p. 132.

† *Γυναικοκρατούμενος*.—Bucerus Blauro, 16 Nov. 1533.

‡ 'Ad opera uxor eum detrudit.'—*Ibid.* Jan. 1534.

§ Letter to Farel, dated Strasburg, May 19, 1539.

houses and at Matthew Zell's. He admired in Bucer, with whom he had corresponded, and whom he afterwards called his father,\* a noble heart, a peaceful spirit, a penetrating mind, and an untiring activity. Capito was not less attractive to him. Calvin knew that, disgusted with the intrigues of the court, he had left the elector of Mentz, and in 1532 had gone to Strasburg in search of evangelical liberty, and from that hour had watched with interest the movements of the Gospel in France. He was, therefore, impatient to see a man who, by the extent of his learning and the nobility of his character, held the first rank in the learned city where he resided; and fortunately Capito, who went to Wisbaden towards the end of August 1534, was still at Strasburg when the reformer passed through it. All these doctors joyfully saw France bringing her tribute at last to the work of Christian instruction. They were struck with Calvin's seriousness, with the greatness of his character, the depth of his thoughts, and the liveliness of his faith; and the young doctor, for his part, drank in with delight that perfume of learning and piety, which exhaled from the conversation and life of these men of God.

One thing, however, checked him: in his opinion the Strasburg reformers observed too strict a middle path, and sometimes sacrificed truth to prudence. Calvin was troubled at this; by not breaking completely with Rome, were they not preparing the way to return to it? He was all the more alarmed, as the young canon of Angoulême had a great inclination for this middle way. Calvin, who would have desired

\* Letter to Bucer, October 15, 1541.

to put Du Tillet in connection with decided reformers, saw the three doctors of Strasburg, and especially Bucer, holding out their hands to Melancthon to reunite popery and the Reformation. Could he have led him into a snare? . . . 'I find learning and piety in Bucer and Capito,' he said one day, 'but they force me to desire in them firmness and constancy. We must be *liberal*, no doubt, but not so as to spend the wealth of another. And what precautions ought we not to take, when it is a question of spending God's truth? . . . He did not give it us that we should contract it in any way.'\* True, these words are found in a document of later date; but already the wavering Du Tillet was approaching the gulf into which he was to fall.

Calvin made up for his disappointments by devoting himself lovingly to the French refugees at Strasburg. He consoled them, succoured them, and gave them very trusty counsel.† To strengthen his exiled fellow-countrymen was the work of his whole life. 'We must be *strangers* in this world,' he said, 'even if we do not quit the *nest*. But blessed are those who, rather than fall away from the faith, freely forsake their homes, and leave their earthly comforts to dwell with Christ.'‡

Calvin did not remain long at Strasburg. Did he fear the influence of that city upon his friend? or did he find too many occupations and disturbances which prevented his giving all his time to the work to which

\* Calvin to Du Tillet, *Lettres Françaises*, i. pp. 4, 54. See also the *Correspondence* published for the first time by M. Crottet, p. 25.

† Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Hérés.* ii. p. 272.

‡ Calvin, *Lettres Françaises*, i. p. 272.



he wished to dedicate himself? I think so, but there was something else. He understood that instead of receiving knowledge from the hand of others, he must personally work the mine of Scripture and dig up the precious gems that it contained. He wished, like the bee, to extract a store of the purest honey from the abundance of the flowers of the divine Word. He had had enough of travelling, of disagreements, of struggles, and of persecution . . . his soul longed for solitude and quiet study. 'O God,' said he, 'hide me in some obscure corner, where I may at last enjoy the repose so long denied me.'\* Calvin departed for Basle.

Erasmus, as we know, had long resided in that city. Calvin desired to see him. He was beyond all doubt much more a man of compromises than Bucer; and from timidity, rather than principle, he inclined to the side of the papacy. He was, however, a great scholar; had he not published the New Testament in Greek? Having left Basle, at the moment of the triumph of the Reformation there, he happened just at this time to be at Friburg in Brisgau, on the road from Strasbourg to Switzerland. Could Calvin pass so near the town where he lived who had '*laid the egg*' of the Reformation, and not try to see him? A writer of the sixteenth century has given an account of the interview between these two men who—one in the department of letters, the other in that of faith—were the greatest personages of the day.

Bucer desired to accompany Calvin and introduce

\* 'Quiete diu negata fruerer.'—Calvin, *Præf. in Psalm.*

him to Erasmus.\* The precaution was almost necessary: the old doctor was *ratting*, wishing to die in peace with Rome. Paul III. had hardly been proclaimed pope, when he who had kindled the fire offered his good services to him, in order to maintain the faith and restore peace to the Church.† His letter quite charmed the crafty pontiff. ‘I know,’ Paul answered, ‘how useful your excellent learning, combined with your admirable eloquence, may be to me in rescuing many minds from these new errors.’‡ The pope even had some idea of sending Erasmus a cardinal’s hat.

Calvin had not chosen his time well, yet Erasmus received him, though not without some little embarrassment. The young reformer, impatient to hear the oracle of the age, began to ask him numerous questions on difficult points.§ Erasmus, fearing to commit himself, was reserved, and gave only vague answers. His interlocutor was not discouraged. Had not the scholar of Rotterdam said that the only remedy for the evils of the Church was the intervention of Christ himself?|| That was precisely Calvin’s idea, and therefore following it up, he explained his convictions with considerable energy. Erasmus listened with astonishment. He perceived at last that the young man would not only go farther than himself but even than

\* ‘Cum Calvinus a Bucero ad Erasmum adductus esset.’—Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Hérés.* ii. p. 251.

† ‘In causam ecclesiæ tranquillandæ.’—Paulus papa Erasmo; Erasmi *Ep.* p. 1539.

‡ ‘Ad novos errores ex multorum animis abscindendos.’—*Ibid.*

§ ‘De intricatis aliquot religionis capitibus sermonem cum ipso contulit.’—Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Hérés.* ii. p. 251.

|| ‘Nec ulla superest medendi spes, nisi Christus ipse vertat animos.’—Erasmi *Op.*

Luther, and would wage a merciless war against all human traditions. The scholar to whom the pope had offered the Roman purple became alarmed; he looked at Calvin with astonishment, put an end to the conversation, and approaching Bucer, whispered in his ear: *Video magnam pestem oriri in Ecclesia contra Ecclesiam*.\* Erasmus broke with the French reformer as he had broken with the German reformer. The two visitors withdrew. We believe the account of this interview to be authentic, in opposition to Bayle who carries his sceptical spirit everywhere. Calvin might have been proud of this opinion of Erasmus. His censure might appear to him praise, and his praise censure, as the poet says.† Luther had said: ‘O pope, I will be thy pestilence and death!’ Calvin and Du Tillet arrived at Basle.

That city possessed a university with distinguished scholars, good theologians, and celebrated printers; but Calvin did not knock at any of their doors. In a bye-street there lived one Catherine Klein, a pious woman, who took delight in serving God, and loved to wash the feet of the saints, as the Gospel says. It was her house the young doctor sought. Coming to the banks of the Rhine, the two friends crossed the famous bridge which unites Little Basle to the old City, and knocked at this pious woman’s door. Here Calvin found ‘the obscure corner’ he had so longed for.‡ Catherine received him with frankness and soon

\* I see a great pestilence rising in the Church against the Church.—Flor. Rémond, *Hist. Hérés.* ii. p. 251. ‘Ad Bucerum Calvinum demonstrans dixisse fertur.’—*Ibid.*

† Whose praise is censure and his censure praise.

‡ ‘Ut in obscuro aliquo angulo abditus.’—(Calv. *Præf. in Psalm.*)

learnt the worth of the man she had in her house. She was not one of those women who from vanity ‘toy and coquet,’ to use Calvin’s own words;\* but of those who having the fear of God before their eyes, are honest and chaste in their appearance.† Distinguished by her virtues and piety, she loved to listen to Calvin, and never grew weary of admiring the beauty of his genius, the holiness of his life, the integrity of his doctrines, and the zeal with which he applied, day and night, to study.‡ Calvin seemed like a lighted candle in her house; and thirty years later, receiving as a lodger a man who was to be one of the victims of the St. Bartholomew—Peter Ramus—this estimable woman took pleasure in describing to him the reformer’s mode of life.§ The illustrious philosopher, uniting his voice with that of the aged Catherine, and standing in the very chamber that Calvin had occupied, apostrophized the reformer, as ‘the light of France, the light of the Christian Church all over the world.’||

In the early part of his stay at Basle, Calvin appears to have seen nobody but his hostess and his inseparable friend Louis du Tillet. He avoided all acquaintanceships that might have led to his being

\* ‘Mignardent et folâtrent.’

† Calvinus, *in Timoth.* I. ch. ii.

‡ ‘Catherina Petita lectissima matrona sanctitate singularis ingenii mirifice captus.’—*Ramus*, Basilea, 1571. See also the *Life of Peter Ramus*, by Mr. Ch. Waddington, who was the first to direct attention to this interesting passage, p. 194.

§ ‘Tum Calvini hospita sæpe ac jucunde mihi narravit.’—*Ramus*, Basilea, 1571.

|| ‘Lumen Galliae, lumen christianæ per orbem terrarum ecclesiæ.’—*Ibid.*



recognised, and he went out but seldom.\* Sometimes, however, he and his friend would climb the hills which rise above the Rhine, and contemplate the magnificence of that calm and mighty river, whose waters are ever flowing onwards, with nothing to interrupt their majestic course.

Labitur et labetur in omne volubilis œvum.†

It was not fear of persecution that led Calvin to hide himself; he was in a free city. But he had need to put himself out of the reach of the strange winds of doctrine that were then rushing over the world, and of all the sensations of one of the most troubled periods of history. He wished to withdraw himself from earthly noises, and hear only the voice of God and the music of heaven. Rapid emotions, now sorrowful, now joyful, continually repeated, as he had so often felt in Paris, neutralised each other and left nothing in his heart. He wished to fix his looks on high, and give the thoughts which descended to him from heaven the time to lay firm hold upon his mind, and become transformed into a strong and unchangeable affection, which would become the soul of his whole life. He had already learnt much; but it was not sufficient for him to learn, he must create: that was the vocation he had received from his Master, and to that end he must concentrate all the strength of his intelligence and of his heart. When God desires to form the ripe ear of corn, he proceeds slowly and silently, but powerfully. The little seed is hardly thrown into the ground when the manifold forces of different agents combine to fecundate the germ. During the coolness of the

\* 'Cum incognitus Basileæ laterem.'—Calv. *Præf. in Psalm.*

† 'It flows and shall flow on for ever.'—Horace, *Ep.*, bk. I. Ep. ii.

night or the heat of the day, the earth imparts her juices, the rain enriches it, and the sun warms it . . . Such was the inner process then going on in the reformer. Divine and human forces were combining to bring to maturity all the germs of beauty and strength that God had deposited in his heart, will, and understanding, and to render his genius capable of undertaking and accomplishing a great work in the world. Calvin felt that he needed silence and concentration. Destined to become one of God's mightiest instruments for his age and all ages to come, it was necessary for him to live alone with God, that he should have God in him, and that the divine warmth should so melt and purify all his natural energies, as to fit him for the accomplishment of his immense task. 'Ah!' said he, without thinking of himself, 'God wishing to publish his law by Moses, led him to Sinai and took him into his heavenly closet.'\* Many of God's ministers have, after Moses, been thus prepared for the work of their office. Luther had been carried away to the Wartburg: Basle was Calvin's Wartburg, still more than Angoulême.

He had, however, one acquaintance, or rather an intimate friend in that city. This was Nicholas Cop, ex-rector of the university of Paris, and now a refugee at Basle. How could Calvin, who had been the innocent cause of his exile, remain long within the same walls without seeing him? While preserving his incognito with respect to the public, he called upon his dear fellow-soldier, and the latter saw that pale familiar face enter his room. The friends now visited

\* Calvin, in *Matth.* iv. 1.

each other and conversed together; but mystery for some time longer shrouded the person of the young reformer.

One day, however, Calvin spoke to Cop of an eminent man then in Basle. This was Simon Grynæus, Melanchthon's schoolfellow, who in 1529 had escaped with difficulty from the violent attacks of the papists of Spire, and had been invited to Basle to take Erasmus's place. 'Well versed in Latin, Greek, philosophy, and mathematics,' said Melanchthon, 'he possessed a mildness of temper that was never put out, and an almost excessive bashfulness.'\* And yet he has been compared 'to the splendour of the sun that overpowers the light of the stars.'†

Calvin knew Grynæus by repute; he met him, and was captivated by his amiable and gentle disposition. Grynæus, on his side, loved Calvin, and the two scholars often shut themselves up together in their room. 'I remember well,' wrote Calvin to Grynæus in after years, 'how we used to talk in private on the best mode of interpreting Scripture.'‡—'The chief merit in an interpreter,' said the Basle professor, 'is an easy brevity without obscurity.' It is the rule Calvin followed. At this time, under the direction of Grynæus, he studied Hebrew literature more thoroughly.§

Calvin's residence at Basle soon became known, even to strangers, and the unseasonable visits which interfered with his studies and which he so much

\* 'Pudore pene immodico.'—*Erasmi Ep.* p. 1464.

† 'Solis radiantis splendor cæterorum siderum lumen obscurat.'—*Bezæ Icones.*

‡ Calvin, *Dédicace de l'Épître aux Romains.*

§ 'Sese hebraicis litteris dedit.'—*Beza, Vita Calvini.*

dreaded, began again. One day a total stranger called upon him.\* He came (he said) on the part of one Christopher Libertet, surnamed Fabri, a student of Montpelier, who had quitted medicine for the ministry, and whom we shall meet again in Switzerland as Farel's fellow-labourer. 'Fabri has desired me to inform you,' said the unknown, 'that he does not entirely approve of certain passages in your book on the *Immortality of the Soul*.' This message from a student, delivered by a stranger, might have offended Calvin. His work was a great success. The power of conviction stamped on it, the weight of the proofs, the force of the arguments drawn from Scripture, its lucidity of style, its richness of thought, the glow of light that shone round every word of the author—all these things subjugated its readers. But the enthusiasm of some of his friends did not blind the author to the imperfections of his work. With touching humility he answered Fabri, who had not long left school: 'Far from being displeased at your opinion, your simplicity and candour have delighted me much.† My temper is not so crabbed as to *refuse to others the liberty I enjoy myself*.‡ You must know, then, that I have almost entirely re-written my book.' This letter is signed *Martinus Lucianus*, the name probably that Calvin went by at Basle. The date, *Basle, 11th September* (the contents show that the year must be 1534), is an important mark in the reformer's life.

Visits were not the only troubles that disturbed Calvin's solitude. His incognito had hardly ceased before

\* 'Jam mihi a nescio quo sermo injectus.'—Calvin to Libertet.

† 'Tantum abest ut tuo judicio offensus fuerim.'—Ibid.

‡ 'Neque enim ea est mea morositas.'—Ibid.



he was attacked by anxieties from every quarter. The discords which broke out in France and Switzerland filled him with sorrow. 'I exhort you with all my soul, you and the brethren, to keep the peace,' he wrote to Fabri. 'In order to maintain it, let us make all the greater efforts, the more Satan endeavours to destroy it. I have been filled with indignation at hearing of the new troubles stirred up by a man from whom I should have suspected nothing of the sort. He has vomited the poison with which he was swollen during a long period of dissimulation; and after darting his sting, he has run away like a viper.' Was this man Caroli?—I cannot say.

In his retirement on the Wartburg, Luther had translated the New Testament. Calvin engaged in a similar task at Basle. On March 27, 1534, a translation was published by Pierre de Wingle at Neuchâtel: it was a small folio, printed in double columns, and was from the pen of Lefèvre of Etaples, but had undergone a revision with regard to certain expressions which still retained a Romish colouring. It would appear that this edition was suppressed, either because it had been made without resorting to the original texts, or because Wingle himself was dissatisfied with it.\* He was soon to publish a more perfect version, in which Calvin assisted while at Basle. We shall have occasion to speak of this in connection with Calvin's cousin, Olivetan, the principal translator. Another work—which was to be the great work of his life—soon occupied the young reformer.

\* It would seem that the only copy extant is that in the library of Neuchâtel.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## INSTITUTES OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

(WINTER 1534.)

CALVIN had not been long in Basle when dreadful news arrived which deeply agitated the inhabitants of that reformed city, and especially Calvin himself. It was reported that in consequence of some controversial placards which had been posted up in Paris, and throughout France, the king's anger had broken all bounds, that the evangelicals were persecuted, that the Châtelet directed the inquisition . . . . and that the burning piles were preparing. Cop, Du Tillet, Calvin, and other refugees conversed about these mournful events. Du Tillet blamed the violent language of the placards; Calvin seems to have kept silence on this point—at least in his famous epistle to Francis I. he does not disavow the placards, which it would have been wise to do, if he had decidedly blamed them. Days and weeks went by in the midst of continual uneasiness; the air seemed big with storms, and terrible explosions from time to time startled every compassionate heart.

At the end of November, Calvin heard of the successive deaths of Berthelot, Du Bourg, Paille, and several others whom he had known. How often he had sat at Du Bourg's table, how often conversed with the poor cripple! . . . Calvin, in his emotion, was

greatly surprised at those who could find no tears for such sorrows. 'Let us reject that mad philosophy,' he said in after years, 'which would make men entirely unfeeling that they may be wise. The stoics must have been void of common sense, when they trampled on the affections of man. . . . There are fanatics even now who would like to introduce these dreams into the Church, who ask for a heart of iron, who cannot support one little tear, and yet, if anything happens to them, against their will, they lament perpetually. . . . The affections which God has placed in human nature are not more vicious of themselves than He who gave them. Ought we not to rejoice in God's gifts? Why, then, should we not be permitted to feel sorrow when they are taken from us? Let believers lament, therefore, when one of their relations or friends is taken away by death, and let them be sad when the Church is deprived of good men. Only, as we know that life is given us in Christ Jesus, let our sorrow be moderated by hope.'\*

One day, probably in December or January, Calvin saw an old man arrive: he was half blind, and felt his way as he walked towards him. It was Courault, who, liberated from prison by Margaret's influence, had escaped from the convent where he had been shut up. It was a great joy to the young doctor to see this venerable Christian again, whose death three years later was to overwhelm him with such deep distress. The refugees surrounded Courault, and wanted to know the terrible news from Paris. He had not witnessed the punishments, but he could describe them, and cries of

\* Calvin, *Actes*, viii. 2.

sorrow rose from every heart. Courault was soon followed by other fugitives. For some weeks there was a little repose; the sky was heavy and threatening, but silent.

On a sudden the tempest burst out again, the bolts fell furiously and consumed many other victims. About the end of January 1535 the news of the martyrdoms of the 21st of that month reached Basle. Calvin's soul was perpetually agitated by these atrocious persecutions. 'Alas!' he exclaimed, 'in France they are burning many faithful and holy people!'<sup>\*</sup> He saw them fastened to the *estrapade*, swinging in the air, plunged into the flames, and then drawn out to be plunged into them again. . . . 'With what furious rage the enemies of God are transported,' he said; 'but though horrible curses and execrable reproaches are hurled upon the Christians from every side, they continue to repose firmly on the grace of Jesus Christ, having confidence that they will be safe even in death.'<sup>†</sup>

Calvin was not the only person to feel these keen emotions. 'As gibbets were set up in various parts of the kingdom,' says Mézeray, 'and *chambres ardentes* were instituted, the Lutheran preachers and those who had listened to them took flight, and in a few months there were more than a hundred refugees who carried their sorrows and their complaints to the courts of the German princes.'<sup>‡</sup> Their tales excited great indignation in Germany. True, the martyrs were often calumniated, but in many cities the refugees

<sup>\*</sup> Calvin, *Préface des Psaumes*.

<sup>†</sup> Calvin, *Actes*, vii. 59.

<sup>‡</sup> Mézeray, *Hist. de France*, ii. p. 981. The *chambres ardentes* were tribunals that pronounced the penalty of the stake against heresy.



from beyond the Rhine were able to refute the falsehoods of their enemies. The true Christians were not deceived, and they recognised the victims as their brethren.\* This was a consolation to the reformer. 'The news having spread to foreign nations,' he said, 'these burnings were counted very wicked by a large number of Germans, and they felt great bitterness against the authors of such tyranny.'†

The 'bitterness' was still greater at Basle. Among those who shared Calvin's sorrow was Oswald Myconius, the friend of Zwingli, antistes or president of the Church, for whom the reformer entertained an affection that lasted all his life. He called him 'his very excellent, most esteemed brother, and very respected friend.'‡ Myconius, as we have stated elsewhere, § was a distinguished philosopher and pupil of Erasmus and Glareanus: while residing at Zurich, he had taught the classics, and among his pupils was Thomas Plater; but the disastrous battle of Cappel had made him renounce this duty. At the moment when Plater, outstripping the fugitives, who were hurrying from the fight, was about to enter the city, he encountered Myconius, who was pacing backwards and forwards before the gates, full of anguish at the thought of the dangers incurred by Zwingli, Zurich, and the Reformation. . . . The professor had hardly caught sight of his pupil, when, running up to him, he asked: 'Is Master Ulrich dead?' 'Alas! yes,'

\* 'Grave passim apud Germanos odium ignes illi excitaverunt.'—Calvin in *Psalm*.

† Calvin, *Préface aux Psaumes*.

‡ Letters of Calvin to Myconius, March 14, and April 17, 1542.

§ See my *History of the Reformation in the Sixteenth Century*, books viii. and xi.

answered Plater. Myconius, struck to the heart, stood motionless, and then, with profound sorrow, exclaimed: 'I can live at Zurich no longer.' Plater, who had had nothing to eat for twenty-four hours, went home with Myconius, who gave him food, and then sat down by him, silent and oppressed by the weight of his thoughts. At last Myconius took him into his room, and said to him, with consternation: 'Where must I go?' . . . The pastor of St. Alban's church at Basle had also fallen on the mountain of Zug. 'Go to Basle, and become minister there,' said Plater.\* Shortly after this the professor and his pupil set out on foot for Basle, where they arrived after many adventures and alarms.

A few days later Myconius was called upon to preach the *Council Sermon*, which was delivered at six in the morning. 'When I entered his room on the morning of the appointed day,' says Plater, 'I found him still in bed. "Father," said I, "get up; you have your sermon to preach." "What! is it to-day?" said Myconius, and jumped out of bed. "What shall be the subject of my sermon? Tell me." "I cannot." "I insist upon your giving me a subject." "Very well; show whence our disaster proceeded, and why it was inflicted on us." "Jot that down upon a piece of paper." I obeyed, and then lent him my Testament, in which he placed the memorandum I had just written. He went into the pulpit, and spoke eloquently before an audience of learned men, attracted there by the desire to hear a man who had never preached before. All were filled with wonder, and after the

\* *Vie de Thomas Plater*, published by M. E. Fick, Doctor of Laws.

sermon I heard Doctor Simon Grynæus say to Doctor Sulterus (who at that time belonged to us): "O Sulterus, let us pray God for this man to stay among us, for he may do much good."\*

Myconius was nominated pastor of St. Alban's, and was soon after called to replace Ecolampadius as president of the Church at Basle. He had entertained some illusions with regard to Francis I. A Frenchman, a strong partisan of that king, had persuaded him that Francis was not ill-disposed towards the Gospel; that if he dissembled his sentiments, it was only because of the prelates of his kingdom; and that if he once obtained the possessions in Italy which he coveted, it would be seen that he had not much liking either for the pope or the papists.† Myconius was struck with indignation and grief, when he heard of the barbarous executions with which that prince had feasted the eyes of the citizens of Paris. He could sympathise all the more with Calvin, as, although a man of mild and temperate disposition, he shared in the decided and energetic opinions of the author of the placards. 'Why sew new patches on so torn a garment?' he said, speaking of popery. 'We should never meet the dragon but to kill him.'‡ A great unity of sentiment drew Calvin and Myconius together in the disastrous times of which we are speaking. The burning stakes of Paris drove them farther from Rome, and bound them closer to the Gospel.

\* *Vie de Thomas Plater*, published by E. Fick.

† 'Videbis quid amicitiae sit remansurum cum papa et papisticis.'—*Myconius ad Bullingerum*, March 1534.

‡ 'Cum draconi non aliter est congreduendum, nisi ut penitus occidatur.'—*Ibid.* in post. epist.

There were minds, however, upon which persecution produced a very different effect. Amid all this indignation and sorrow, Du Tillet remained shut up in himself and silent. The gentleness of the Word of God attracted him, but the bitterness of the cross terrified him. He had quitted everything with joy, believing that a general reform of the Church would be carried out promptly; but when he saw a mortal combat beginning between the Gospel and popery, 'he felt a deep emotion, he lost his rest,' as he tells us himself, 'and suffered inexpressible trouble and anguish of mind.' Each of the punishments at Paris added to the doubts and agitation of that candid but weak nature. He seemed to fear schism only, but the prospect of persecution and reproach had some share in his alarm. 'He did not understand,' as Calvin says, 'that while bearing the cross we keep Christ company, so that all bitterness is sweetened.' He kept himself apart, he passed days and nights filled with torture. 'I have been lonely, and without rest for the space of three years and a half,' he wrote to his old friend in 1538.\* His intimacy with the reformer was changed, and three years later he was to cause him a sorrow as great, nay greater, no doubt, than that which Calvin had felt when he heard of the deaths of the martyrs.

The intrigues of the agents of Francis I. began to be attended with success. They displayed inconceivable activity to mislead public opinion. They spoke, wrote, and distributed everywhere 'certain little books full of lies, in which it was said that the king had behaved harshly to none but rebels, who desired

\* Du Tillet to Calvin, September 7, 1538.



to disturb the State under the cloak of religion.' Men, and often the best of men, are unhappily prone to believe evil. Germany began to cool down; even at Basle many people were deceived; and although they did not believe all the calumnies circulated against the martyrs, the impression still remained. 'If a few sectarians have been punished,' said many good men, 'they are anabaptists, who, far from taking the Word of God for the rule of their faith, follow only their own corrupt imaginations, and have at bottom no other doctrine but a contempt of the higher powers. We cannot defend the cause of a handful of seditious people who desire to overthrow everything, even political order.'\*

Shut up with his books in the room he occupied at Catherine Klein's, Calvin thought day and night of these cruel accusations, and his noble soul felt indignant not only that the children of the heavenly Father should be forced to suffer atrocious punishments, but that it was attempted to defame their characters. 'These court practisers,' he said, 'load the holy martyrs after their death with undeserved blame and vile calumnies, and endeavour to hide the disgrace of this shedding of innocent blood under cowardly disguises. They thus put poor believers to death, and no one is able to have compassion on them.'† The young doctor saw himself between two rivers of blood—that of his brethren already immolated, and that of other Christians who would certainly

\* 'Turbulentos homines qui totum ordinem politicum convellerent.'—Calvin in *Psalm*. See also Beza, *Hist. eccles.*, p. 14, and *Vie de Calvin*, p. 19.

† Calvin, *Préface des Psaumes*.

be immolated in their turn. He had not been able to prevent the death of a Milon and a La Forge; but he would at least try to turn away the sword that threatened other lives. 'If I do not oppose it righteously and to the best of my ability,' said Calvin, 'I shall fairly be called cowardly and disloyal on account of my silence.' He will speak, he will rush between the executioners and their victims. A heavenly word rang through his soul: *Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction.\** He therefore formed one of those resolutions which, in a character such as his, are unalterable. 'I will obey Him who speaks to me from on high,' he said. 'I will reply to the wicked tales that are circulated against my brethren; and as similar cruelties may be practised against many other believers, I will endeavour to touch foreign nations with some compassion in their favour. Such was the reason,' he adds, 'which moved me to publish the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.'† Never had noble book so noble an origin. Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, and Tertulian had written their *Apologies* by the light of the stakes of the second century; Calvin wrote his by the light of those of the sixteenth. The publication of the *Christian Institutes* was the pitiful cry of a compassionate soul at the sight of those who were going to the stake.

Calvin had long meditated the great subject which then absorbed him—the system of Christian faith; and his book was to be the finest body of doctrine ever possessed by the Church of Christ.

\* Proverbs xxxi. 8.

† *Préface des Psaumes.*

During four centuries, reckoning from the twelfth, minds of the highest order had formulated abstract systems, in which scholastic rationalism and ecclesiastical authority were habitually combined; they had wasted their strength in running after expositions, contradictions, resolutions, conclusions, and interminable *pros* and *cons*; theology was lost in an arid wilderness. It was about to come out of it in order to enter into new lands. But it was not a trifling matter to make Christian science pass from death to life, from darkness to light. It required an awakened conscience, a heart thirsting for righteousness, a high intelligence, and a powerful will boldly to break through all the *chains*,\* to scatter to the winds the *sentences* and the *sums* which the schoolmen had painfully woven out of their brains or out of traditions that were often impure, and to set up in their place the living rock of the heavenly Word on which the temple of God is to be built.

Calvin was the man called to this work. Until his time, dogmatics, when passing from one period to another, had always advanced in the same direction, from abstraction to abstraction. But suddenly the course was changed; Calvin refused to tread the accustomed road. Instead of advancing in the way of the schoolmen towards new developements of a more refined intellectualism, he turned eagerly backwards, he heard the voice of conscience, he felt the wants of the heart, he ran whither alone they can be satisfied, he traversed fifteen centuries. He went to the gospel springs, and there collecting in a golden cup the pure and living

\* 'Catenæ Patrum.'

waters of divine revelation, presented them to the nations to quench their thirst.

The Reformation was not simply a change in the doctrine or in the manners or in the government of the Church: it was a creation. The first century had witnessed the first Christian creation, the fifteenth century witnessed the second.

Luther, by the power of his faith, was the principal organ of this new creation. Freeing himself from the thick darkness that had hung over mankind for so many centuries, he had with holy energy hurled his lightnings and thunderbolts in every direction around him, so that all the horizon was lighted up. Calvin appeared; he gathered up these scattered flames, and made them into an immense fire; and while the gleams of the primitive creation of the Church had been confined almost entirely within the limits of the Roman world, the fires of the new creation are spreading to the ends of the earth.

Calvin retired within himself to meditate on the work to which God called him; he turned a deep glance into those depths of Scripture which he had so often sounded. Holding the torch of the Spirit, he summoned before him the great Persons of the Christian economy, not to make them figure, as the schoolmen had done, in a learned fencing-match, but to elicit from them the fundamental truths of faith, and plant the golden columns of the temple of light and life.

The *Institutes of the Christian Religion* is Calvin's great achievement; it is Calvin himself, and we must therefore describe it. History, indeed, generally narrates the actions performed by the arm of the soldier



or the negociations of the diplomatist; but the work that Calvin then accomplished, by spiritual force, far exceeds in the importance of its consequences all that has ever been done by the pens of the ablest statesmen or the swords of the bravest warriors. Let us describe, therefore, this 'action' of a nature apart. 'Curious minds,' as Calvin calls them, will perhaps pass over these pages: we regret it, but we must write them all the same.

'The whole sum of wisdom,' said the great doctor of modern times at the beginning of his work, 'is that by knowing *God*, each of us knows *himself* also; and these two facts are bound to each other by so many ties, that it is not easy to discern which goes before and produces the other.'

In fact, Calvin, when addressing man, shows him first of all *God himself*—wonder of wonders!—*in man*. 'God,' says he to man, 'has stamped in you a knowledge of himself, and he continually refreshes this memory in you, as if he poured it out drop by drop. We have *a consciousness of divinity graven so deeply on our minds*, that we cannot erase it. The rebellion even of the wicked bears testimony of this, for while combating madly to throw off the fear of God, that fear remains inevitably clinging to them, as if it were in the marrow of their bones.' But after ascribing to man the exquisite privilege of bearing the name of God within him, Calvin immediately brings a severe charge against the human race. 'Alas! we shall hardly find *one* in a hundred that cherishes this divine seed in his heart. Some through curiosity fly away in vain speculations; others vanish in foolish superstitions; others, finally, deprive God of his office as judge and

governor, shut him up idle in heaven, and thus remain without God in the world. . . . What is to be done? Shall we toss and tumble continually, carried hither and thither by many erroneous levities?' \*

Calvin then takes man by the hand, and wishing him to know the eternal mysteries, places him before a vast spiritual mirror, the Holy Scriptures, where all invisible things appear in their living reality. Thus distinguishing himself from all the doctors of catholicism who had spoken for ten centuries, he puts in the fore-front, in an absolute manner, the full sufficiency and sovereign authority of the Word of God.

'God,' said he, 'has opened his sacred mouth, to make known that he is the God whom we should adore. When a handsome book in well-formed characters is set before those who have weak eyes, or before decrepit old men, they can hardly read two words consecutively; but if they take a magnifying glass, forthwith they read everything distinctly. If we wish to see clearly, let us take Holy Scripture: without it we have but a confused and partial knowledge of God in our minds; but that drives away all obscurity in us, and shows us clearly God's heart.'

Already in the time of Calvin there were certain doctors who would strip the Bible of its inspiration and christianity of its supernaturalism. 'There are, I know full well,' he said, 'despisers, and cavillers, and mockers, who attack the Word, and if I had to fight out this quarrel with them, it would not be difficult for me to silence their cackling. But in addition to all the proof that reason brings, there is

\* *Institution*, liv. i. ch. i, ii, iii, iv.

one above all others. It is necessary that the same Spirit which has spoken by the mouth of the prophets should enter our hearts, that he should touch them to the quick, and convince them that the prophets have faithfully declared what had been enjoined them from on high.\* The testimony of the Holy Ghost—that is the proof of proofs.

Calvin then turns to man, the self-worshipper, who puts himself in the place of God, and reveals to him the sin that is in him. ‘Come down now,’ he says, ‘come down and consider thyself. Learn to know this sin, derived from Adam and dwelling in us, like a glowing furnace, perpetually throwing out flames and sparks, and the fire of which not only burns the senses, but pollutes all that is most noble in our souls.’ There is no means by which man can escape of himself from this wretchedness of his nature. ‘If thou pretendest to rise by thy own strength, thou standest on the end of a reed . . . that snaps immediately.’†

Then Calvin shows man where his salvation is to be found, and describes with grandeur the work of expiation. ‘While our condemnation holds us surprised, trembling, and startled before the judgment seat of God, the penalty to which we were subject has been laid on the innocent. All that can be imputed to us in the sight of God is transferred upon Jesus Christ. The divine founder of the Kingdom has suffered in the place of the children of the Kingdom. . . . Our peace can be found only in the terrors and agony of Christ our Redeemer.’‡

\* *Institution*, liv. i. ch. vi. and vii.

† *Ibid.* liv. i. ch. i. ; liv. ii. ch. ii. and iii.

‡ *Ibid.* liv. ii. ch. xvi. and xvii.

But how does this work, accomplished *out* of man, act *in* man? . . . . Such is the great question the Reformer sets himself. Divine faith which lays hold of the righteousness of Christ *upon the cross* gives birth at the same moment to the holiness of Christ *in the heart*. 'Man has no sooner embraced the atonement with a faith full of confidence,' he says, 'than he experiences an unalterable peace in his conscience. He possesses a spirit of adoption, which makes him call God *my Father!* and which procures him a sweet and joyful communion with the heavenly Father. Immediately the least drop of faith is put into our souls we begin to contemplate the face of God, kind and favourable to us. True, we see it from afar, but it is with an undoubting eye, and we know that there is no deception.'

A new question is here started. The young doctor is asked: Is man saved by charity or without it? He makes answer: 'There is no other faith which justifies save that which is united with charity; but it is not from charity that it derives the power to justify. Faith justifies only because it puts us in communication with the righteousness of Christ. Whosoever confounds the two righteousnesses (that of man and that of God) hinders poor souls from reposing on the sole and pure mercy of God, plaits a crown of thorns for Jesus Christ, and turns his sacrifice to ridicule.'

Here Calvin puts forward the grand idea which characterises the Reformation effected by his teaching; namely, *that it is only the new man which we should value*. After insisting as much as any doctor on the work that Christ does *without us*, he insists more than any on the work Christ must do *within us*. 'I exalt to the highest degree,' he says, 'the con-



junction that we have with our Chief,—the dwelling he makes in our hearts by faith,—the sacred union by which we enjoy him. It is necessary that we should perceive in our lives a melody and harmony between the righteousness of God and the obedience of our souls.’

But Calvin observed that many humble, timid christians were distressed because they experienced only a weak faith. These he consoles, and the images he employs are picturesque: ‘If any one, shut up in a deep dungeon,’ he says, ‘received the light of the sun obliquely and partially, through a high and narrow window, he would not certainly have a sight of the full sun, yet he would not fail to receive a certain quantity of light and to enjoy its use. In the same way, though we are shut up in the prison of this earthly body, where much obscurity surrounds us on every side, if we have *the least spark* of God’s light, we are sufficiently illuminated and may have a firm assurance.’

May not that flame be extinguished, ask christians hesitatingly. ‘No,’ said Calvin, ‘the light of faith is never so extinct that there does not remain some glimmer. The root of faith is never so torn from the heart, that it does not remain fastened there, although it seems to lean to this side or that.’ ‘Faith,’ he exclaimed (and he had often felt it), ‘faith is an armed man within us to resist the attacks of the evil one. . . . If we put faith in the front, she receives the blows and wards them off. She may indeed be shaken, as a stalworth soldier may be compelled by a violent blow to step backwards. Her shield may receive damage so as to lose its shape, but not be penetrated; and

even in this extremity the shield deadens the blow, and the weapon does not pierce to the heart.'

After consoling the timid and uplifting the wounded, this extraordinary man, who speaks with the firmness of one of the captains of the army of God, exhorts the soldiers of Christ to be brave: 'When St. John promises the victory to our faith, he does not mean simply that it will be victorious in *one* battle, or in *ten*, but in *all*. Be full of courage then. To fluctuate, to vary, to be tossed to and fro; to doubt, to vacillate, to be kept in suspense, and finally to despair . . . . that is not having confidence. We must have a solid support on which we can rest. *God has said it*, that is enough. Being under the safeguard of Christ, we are in no danger of perishing.' \*

Calvin turning to Rome seeks for the origin of its errors and superstitions, and finds it in the pelagianism with which it is tainted. Grace in all its fulness,—grace from the first movement of regeneration until the final accomplishment of salvation, was the keynote of all Calvin's theology; and it is also the powerful artillery with which he batters the Roman fortress. Like St. Paul in the first century, like St. Augustine in the fifth, Calvin is the *Doctor of grace* in the sixteenth. This is one of his essential features. 'The will of man,' he said, 'cannot of itself incline to good. Such a movement, which is the beginning of our conversion to God, Scripture entirely attributes to the Holy Ghost. A doctrine not only useful, but sweet and savoury through the fruit it bears; for those who do not know themselves to be members of the peculiar

\* *Institution*, liv. iii. ch. ii.; liv. ii. ch. xii, xix, xx; liv. xiii. ch. iii, iv, v.

people of God, are in a continual trembling. . . . No doubt the wicked find in it a matter to accuse and cavil at, to disparage and ridicule . . . but if we fear their petulance, we must keep silence as to our faith, for there is not a single article which they do not contaminate with their blasphemies. Christ (he continues) wishing to deliver us from all fear in the midst of so many deadly assaults, has promised that those who have been given him by his Father to keep, shall not perish.\*

At this period Calvin hears a clamour raised against him. He is accused of maintaining that God predestines the wicked to evil, and he replies at once by reprobating such an impious doctrine. 'These mockers jabber against God,' he says, 'alleging that the wicked are unjustly condemned, since they execute only what God has determined . . . Not so,' he exclaims; 'far from having obeyed God's command, the wicked by their lusts rebel against it as far as in them lies. There must be no fencing with God; there must be no saying, with Agamemnon in Homer, speaking of evil: It is not *I who am the cause*, but Jupiter and Fate.'\*

Calvin next hastens to show the fruits of faith: 'We have given the first rank to doctrine,' he said, 'but to be useful to us, it must *penetrate into the soul, pass into the manners and regulate the actions of our life*. . . . Since the Holy Ghost consecrates us to be temples of God, we must take pains that the glory of God fills the temple . . . We know those babblers who are content with having the gospel on their lips,

\* *Institution*, liv. ii. ch. iii; liv. iii. ch. xxi, xxii, xxiii.

† *Ibid.* liv. i. ch. xvii, xviii.

whilst it ought to sink to the bottom of the soul, and we detest their babbling.'

Calvin had carefully studied the condition of the Church during the Middle Ages: what had he found there? . . . The separation of religion and morality: a government, official doctrines, ceremonies, but all stripped of moral life. At that time religion was a tree stretching its branches wide into the air, but there was no sap flowing through them. To restore a lively faith in religion, and through faith a holy morality was the reformer's aim. He said: 'God *first impresses on our hearts the love of righteousness*, to which we are not inclined by nature; and then he gives us a certain rule, which does not permit us to go astray.'\* Accordingly, a morality, unknown for ages, became not only in Geneva, but wherever Calvin's doctrine penetrated, the distinctive feature of the Reformation.

An important thought, however, still absorbs him. He wishes not only to effect certain reforms in certain articles, but to constitute the Church. In Calvin's estimation the Church is in an especial manner the whole assembly of the children of God; but he acknowledges also, as having a right to this name, the visible assembly of those who, in different parts of the world, profess to worship the Lord: 'A great multitude, in which the children of God are, alas! but a handful of unknown people, *like a few grains on the threshing-floor under a great heap of straw*. Our rudeness, our idleness, and the vanity of our minds require external helps (he added), and for that reason God has instituted pastors and teachers.'†

\* *Institution*, liv. iii. ch. vi.

† *Ibid.* liv. iv. ch. i.



That was a solemn time for Calvin, when in the room he occupied at Catherine Klein's, he finished his *Institutes*. In after years pious Christians entered her house with respect, and one of them, Peter Ramus, being there in 1568, five years after the reformer's death, exclaimed with emotion: 'Here were kindled the torches that shed so great a light! Here those illustrious *Christian Institutes* were composed; and here Calvin gave himself up wholly to heavenly vigils!'<sup>\*</sup>

The *Christian Institutes* in its earliest form was a simple defence, explaining briefly *law, faith, prayer, the sacraments, Christian liberty*, and the nature of the *Church and State*. But the French refugees at Geneva, and even distant protestants, continually solicited Calvin to set forth the whole Christian doctrine in his book; and accordingly it received numerous additions.<sup>†</sup>

The *Christian Institutes* are a proof that christian love prevailed in Calvin's mind: indeed, he wrote for the justification of *believers, his brethren*. However, by defending the reformed, he explained and justified the Reformation itself. What are its principles? The formative principle of faith and of the Church is, with him as with Luther, the sovereign Word of God; but he asserts it with more decision than his predecessor. Calvin is anti-traditional: he will have nothing to do

<sup>\*</sup> 'Hic tanti luminis faces primum incensæ, &c.'—*Ramus*, Basilea, 1571.

<sup>†</sup> The successive additions are easily seen in the first volume of Calvin's Works just published in Brunswick by three Strasburg divines, MM. Baum, Cunitz, and Reuss. We there find the different editions of the *Institutes*, and the passages peculiar to each are printed in larger type. We refer to the *Synopsis* in six columns of the editions of 1536–1539–1543–1550–1559, &c. In its first form the *Institutes* consisted of six chapters only; in the last, of eighty, divided into four books. Our selections have been made from the complete edition.

with host, or font, or festivals and other ceremonies preserved by Luther. He did not *reform* the Church, he *re-formed* it; he created it anew. Zwingli also was scriptural, as opposed to tradition; yet Calvin's theology is different from his; that of the Zurich doctor was specially exegetic, while that of the Geneva doctor was specially dogmatic. If from the formative principle we pass to that which theologians call the material principle, namely, that which distinguishes the nature and very essence of its doctrine, we find that it is at heart the same in Luther and Calvin—gratuitous salvation; but the former, clinging to Christian *anthropology*, laid down as a fundamental article, the justification by faith of the regenerate man; whilst Calvin, clinging particularly to *theology*, to the doctrine of God, proclaimed first of all, salvation by the sovereignty of divine grace.

Calvin's polemics, in his *Institutes*, are essentially positive. Like a master in the midst of artists, who are endeavouring to draw the same picture, Calvin traces his outline with a bold hand, distributes the light and shade, and succeeds in making an admirable work. And from that time his rivals have only to look at it, to acknowledge the imperfections of their own, with all their want of proportion and extravagance. . . . Calvin destroys what is ugly, but he first creates the beautiful.

The *Institutes* were admired by the finest spirits of the age. Montluc, bishop of Valence, called Calvin the greatest theologian in the world. A French writer of our day, who does not belong to the Reform, but is a correct and profound thinker,\* has charac-

\* M. Nisard.

terised the *Institutes* 'as the first work of our times which presents an orderly arrangement of materials, with a composition thoroughly appropriate and exact;' and has distinguished Calvin himself, 'as treating in a masterly manner all the questions of Christian philosophy, and as rivalling the most sublime writers in his great thoughts on God, whose style (he adds) has been equalled, but not surpassed, by Bossuet.'

## CHAPTER XV.

CALVIN ADDRESSES THE KING AND DEPARTS FOR ITALY.

(AUGUST 1535.)

THE object of the *Christian Institutes* was to make known to Christendom, and particularly to the protestants of Germany, the doctrines professed in France by the men whom the king was putting to death. But was that all he had to do? Calvin thought he saw something more pressing still. His representations, instead of passing through Germany, might be addressed direct to the king. In his anguish and solitary meditations, he had often asked himself why he should not do it directly and publicly? . . . It was no doubt a great enterprise for a persecuted and almost unknown young man to address that powerful monarch, who was mercilessly throwing his best subjects into the flames. Calvin did not at first entertain so bold a project. Later, he said to the king: 'I thought of nothing less than writing things to be laid before your Majesty.'\* But the lamentable spectacle presented by France was night and day before his eyes. And knowing that the same fate was hanging over the heads of all who desired no other mediator but Christ, was it right for him to be silent?

\* Dedication of the *Institutes*.



In truth, the glare of the burning piles was re-appearing in France. A pious husbandman of Bresse, 'much exercised in the word of God,' by name John Cornon, was arrested in his native village in the month of May and taken to Macon. When brought before his judges, he spoke with such faith and courage, that they were astonished and confounded. Accordingly at the end of June, he was bound to a hurdle, dragged to the place of execution, and there burnt alive.\* Shortly after this, one Dennis Brion, a man zealous for the gospel, was put to death during 'the great days' of Angers, in order to terrify the crowds who flocked thither from all parts for these festivals.† The flames which burnt these pious confessors might perhaps shortly burn other men of God, whom Calvin desired to save at any cost. He therefore determined to write to the king, dedicating his book to him . . . A bold step!

'Sire,' he said, 'you are yourself a witness by what false calumnies our doctrine is everywhere defamed. Have you not been told that it tends to nothing else but to ruin all kingdoms and governments, to disturb the peace, to abolish all law, to confiscate lordships and possessions, and, in a word, to throw everything into confusion? And nevertheless you hear only the least part of these outrages. Horrible stories are circulated against us, for which, if they were true, we should richly deserve to be hanged a thousand times over.'

What Calvin undertook to do was not merely to show that the evangelical doctrine of the Reformation

\* Crespin, *Martyrol.* fol. 116.

† Drion, *Hist. Chron.* i. p. 25.

has the right to exist side by side with the Roman Catholic doctrine. This philosophical and Christian stand-point was not that of the sixteenth century. If the evangelical doctrine has a right to exist, it is (said Calvin, boldly) because it is the truth. He desired to gain over both king and people to those convictions, which in his opinion were alone capable of enlightening and of saving them.

‘Our defence,’ he said, ‘does not consist in disavowing our doctrine, but in maintaining it to be true. Truth deprives her adversaries of the right to open their mouths against her. And for this reason, Sire, I pray you to obtain full information of a cause which hitherto has been treated with impetuous fury rather than with judicial gravity. . . . Do not think that I am striving here in my own private defence, in order to return to my native country. Verily, I bear it such human affection as is right, but things are now so arranged, that I am not greatly distressed at being kept out of it. . . No, Sire, I undertake the common cause of all believers, and even that of Christ himself, a cause now so rent and trodden down in your kingdom, that it seems desperate. . . No doubt, Christ’s truth is not lost and scattered; but it is hidden away and buried, as if deserving of all ignominy. The poor Church is driven out by banishment, consumed by cruel deaths, and so terrified by threats and terrors, that she dares not utter a word. And yet the enemies of truth are not satisfied. They insist with their accustomed fury on beating down the wall which they have already shaken, and in completing the ruin they have begun.’

Here Calvin asks if no one is taking up the defence

of these persecuted Christians . . . He looks . . . alas! the evangelicals are silent, the queen of Navarre scarcely raises her timid voice, and diplomatists are persuading the Germans that the evangelicals of France are fanatics and madmen . . . every one trembles . . . ‘Nobody,’ he exclaims, ‘nobody comes forward to oppose this fury. If even any should wish to appear to favour the truth, they confine themselves to saying that we should in some way pardon the *ignorance* . . . the *impudence* of these simple folks. Thus they treat God’s most sure truth as *impudence* and *ignorance*. Those whom our Lord has so esteemed as to impart to them the secrets of his heavenly wisdom, they call *simple folks*! who permit themselves to be easily deceived, so ashamed are they of the Gospel.’

Who then shall take the cause of truth in hand? . .

‘It is your business, Sire,’ said Calvin to the king, ‘not to avert either your ears or your heart from so just a defence. A great matter is at stake. We have to learn how God’s glory shall be maintained on earth, how his truth shall retain its honour, and how Christ’s kingdom shall remain in its integrity . . . A matter truly worthy of your ears, worthy of your government and of your royal throne! . . . The idea which makes a true king, is that the king knows himself to be a true minister of God in the management of his kingdom. A reign which has not God’s glory for its aim, is not a reign but a mere brigandage.’

Calvin had hardly spoken thus when he seemed to see Francis refusing to turn aside from his brilliant fêtes to lend his ears to the meanest of his subjects.

The king listens to Montmorency, to Tournon . . . he hastens to meet the Duchess d'Etampes; he even welcomes artists and men of letters; but these miserable religionists . . . never!

'Sire,' said Calvin, 'do not turn away in disdain of our meanness. Verily, we confess that we are poor despicable folks,—miserable sinners before God, reviled and rejected before men . . . Nay, if you like it, we are the scum of the earth or anything more worthless still, that can be named. Yes, we have nothing left in which we can glory before God, except his only mercy . . . and nothing before men, except our weakness!'

But the apologist immediately lifts up his head with holy pride:

'Nevertheless,' he says, 'our doctrine must remain exalted, invincible, and far above all the power and glory of the world. For it is not ours, but that of the living God and his Christ, whom God has made King to rule from sea to sea, and from the rivers unto the ends of the earth, . . . and whose magnificence the prophets have foretold, saying that he shall overthrow kingdoms strong as iron and brass, and shining like silver and gold.'

Here the advocate of his brethren hears an objection from their enemies. He sees them clustering round Francis, and incessantly repeating to him that *these folks*, even while putting forward the Word of God, are only its *perverse corruptors*. . . . 'Sire,' he continues, 'you can judge for yourself, by reading our confession (the *Institutes*) to what an extent the reproach is nothing but wicked calumny and brazen impudence. What is more conformable with the christian faith,



than to acknowledge ourselves stripped of all virtue to be clothed with God? empty of all good to be filled with Him? the slaves of sin to be freed by Him? blind, to have our sight restored by Him? lame, that He may make us walk? weak, to be supported by Him? in a word, to put off from us all manner of glory, that He alone may be glorified? . . . Ah! we do not read of men being blamed for drinking too deeply at the fountain of living waters; on the contrary, the prophet bitterly reproves those who have hewed out broken cisterns that can hold no water.\*

Calvin even attempted—and a hopeless attempt it was—to touch the king's heart: 'Consider, Sire, all parts of our cause. We are persecuted, some of us are kept in prison, others are scourged, others forced to do penance, others banished, others escape by flight. . . . We are in tribulation, insulted, treated cruelly, looked upon as outlaws, and accursed. . . . And for what? . . . . Because we place our hope in the living God, and believe that life everlasting is *to know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.*'

Calvin knew very well, however, that the victory would not be easy. He had seen the priests closely, in the capital, in cities of second rank, and in the country. He fancied he could hear the cries raised by the curés in their parishes, and the monks in their convents. Wishing, therefore, to enlighten the king, he did so in a rather coarse manner, after the fashion of the times. 'Why,' he asked, 'do our enemies fight so stoutly and so sternly for the mass, purgatory, pilgrimages, and such rubbish?' . . . Because the belly

\* Jeremiah, ii. 13.

is their God, and the kitchen their religion. Because, although some treat themselves delicately and others starve upon crusts, they all eat out of the same pot which, without these branches to warm them (the mass, purgatory, &c.) would not only grow cold, but freeze entirely.'

Calvin was not ignorant however that the really dangerous enemies of the Reformation were not those priests and friars whom Erasmus and so many others had often flagellated to the great delight of the king. He imagined he saw haughty nobles, fanatical priests and doctors entering the king's closet, and pouring their perfidious accusations into his ear. 'I hear them,' he says, 'they call our doctrine *new*. . . . Verily, I have no doubt it is *new*, so far as they are concerned, seeing that even Christ and his gospel are quite new to them. But he who knows that this preaching of St. Paul's is old, namely, that *Christ died for our sins and was raised again for our justification*, finds nothing new among us. True, it has long been hidden and unknown, but the crime must be laid to the wickedness of man; and now that by God's goodness it is restored to us, it ought at least to be received into its ancient authority.'

Here the enemies persist: they claim the old doctors of the Church as being in their favour. This was the strongest argument in the eyes of Francis, who affected a certain respect for ancient christian literature. Calvin was familiar with the writings of the doctors: he had studied them night and day at Angoulême, Paris, and Basle.' 'The Fathers have been mistaken, just like other men,' he said, 'but these good and obedient sons (the Romish friars) adore the errors of

the Fathers, and put out of sight what they have said aright, as if they had no other care but to pick out the rubbish from among the gold. . . . And then they attack us with loud clamours as despisers of the Ancients. Far from despising them, we could prove from their testimony the greater part of what we are now saying. But those holy persons often differ from each other and sometimes contradict themselves. They ought not to tyrannise over us. It is Christ alone whom we must obey wholly and without exception. Why do not our adversaries take the Apostles for their Fathers, since it is their landmarks and theirs only that we are forbidden to remove? And if they desire the landmarks of the Fathers to be observed, why do they, whenever it suits their pleasure, overleap them so audaciously?’

Further than this, Calvin makes use of these doctors; he does not fear them, on the contrary, he appeals to them. He calls them all up to make them defile before the king and bear testimony against the doctrines of Rome.

‘It was a Father, Epiphanius, who said that it was a horrible abomination to see an image of Christ or of any saint in a christian temple.

‘It was a Father, Pope Gelasius, who said that the substance of the bread and wine dwells in the sacrament of the Holy Supper, as the human nature dwells in our Lord Jesus Christ, united to his divine essence.

‘It was a Father, Augustine, who called it a rash theory to assert any doctrine without the clear testimony of Scripture.

‘It was a Father, Paphnutius, who maintained that the ministers of the Church ought not to be forbidden

to marry, and that chastity consisted in having a lawful wife.

‘It was a Father, Augustine, who contended that the Church ought not to be preferred to Christ, because whilst ecclesiastical judges, being men, may be mistaken, Christ always judges righteously. . . Ah! if I wished to reckon up all the points in which the Roman doctors reject the yoke of the Fathers, whose obedient children they call themselves, months and years would pass away in reading the long roll. . . And then they reprove us for going beyond the ancient boundaries!’

Calvin did not forget that he was speaking to a prince. Struck with the condition of the world at this important moment, when old superstition and new doubts, old disorders and new immoralities, ambitions, war, and desolations, were all conflicting together, he called loudly for a remedy; and being convinced that the Reformation alone could save society, he exclaimed: ‘Oceans of evil are deluging the land. New plagues are ravaging the world. Everything is falling into ruins. We must despair of human affairs, or put them to rights, even if it be by violent remedies. And yet men reject the remedy. . . . Ah! God’s everlasting truth alone ought to be listened to in God’s kingdom. Against it neither proscription, nor lapse of years, nor ancient customs, nor any compact whatever, avails anything.’

‘But the Church,’ say his adversaries. ‘If we are not the Church, where was it before you?’ ‘Alas!’ answered Calvin, ‘how often has not the Church suffered eclipse, been deformed and oppressed by wars, seditions, and heresies. . . Does not St. Hilary reprim-



mand those who, blinded by an unreasoning respect, did not observe what sores were sometimes hidden under a fair outside. You seek the Church of God in the beauty of its buildings. But know you not that there it is that Antichrist will set up his throne? Mountains, woods, and lakes, prisons, wildernesses, and caves—these are to me safer and more trustworthy; for there prophesied the prophets, who had withdrawn to them. God, seeing that men were unwilling to obey the truth, permitted them to be buried in deep darkness, and the form of a true Church to be lost, while still preserving those who belonged to it, hidden and scattered here and there. If you are willing, Sire, to give up a part of your leisure, and to read my writings. . . . you will see clearly that what our adversaries call a Church is a cruel gehenna, a slaughter-house of souls, a torch, a ruin.'

Finally, the young doctor, knowing that the cardinals were continually repeating to Francis I., 'See what contentions, troubles, and disturbances the preaching of this doctrine has brought with it,' gave an answer to that vulgar accusation which is rather striking and original: 'The Word of God,' he says, 'never comes forward without Satan's rousing himself and fighting. A few years ago, when everything was buried in darkness, this lord of the world played with men as he list, and like a Sardanapalus, took his pastime in peace. What could he do but sport and jest, seeing that he was then in tranquil possession of his kingdom? But since the light shining from on high has chased away the darkness, the prince of this world has suddenly thrown off his lethargy and taken

up arms. First, he resorted to force in order to oppress truth; then, to stratagem to obscure and extinguish it. Oh! what perversity to accuse the Word of God of the seditions stirred up against it by fools and madmen!

‘Ah! Sire, it is not us who stir up troubles, it is those who resist the goodness of God. Is it likely that we, whose mouths have never uttered a seditious word; whose lives, while we lived under your sceptre, were always simple and peaceful, should plot the overthrowing of kingdoms? . . . Now, even that we are expelled, we cease not to pray to God for the prosperity of your reign.

‘If there be any who, under colour of the gospel, stir up tumults; if there be any who wish to conceal their carnal licence by asserting the liberty and grace of God: there are laws and punishments ordained to purge these offences. But let not God’s gospel be blasphemed by the evil-doings of the wicked.’

Calvin thus brings his letter to a conclusion: ‘Sire,’ he said, ‘I have set before you the iniquity of our calumniators. I have desired to soften your heart, to the end that you would give our cause a hearing. I hope we shall be able to regain your favour, if you should be pleased to read without anger this confession which is our defence before your Majesty. But if malevolent persons stop your ears; if the accused have not an opportunity of defending themselves; if impetuous furies, unrestrained by your order, still exercise their cruelty by imprisonments and by scourging, by tortures, mutilation, and the stake . . . verily, as sheep given up to slaughter, we

shall be reduced to the last extremity. Yet even then we shall possess our souls in patience, and shall wait for the strong hand of the Lord. Doubtless, it will be stretched forth in due season. It will appear armed to deliver the poor from their afflictions, and to punish the despisers who are now making merry so boldly.

‘May the Lord, the King of Kings, establish your throne in righteousness and your seat in equity.’

Such was the noble and touching defence which a young man of twenty-six addressed to the king of France. He heard from afar the mournful cries of the victims; and his soul being stirred with compassion and indignation, he appeared as a suppliant before the voluptuous prince who was putting them to death.

After finishing an address of such rare eloquence, Calvin wrote the date—*Basle, 1st August, 1535*, and then hastened to get the manuscript printed.\*

There was a house at Basle, on the heights of St. Pierre, known by the sign of the *Black Bear*, where there was a printing office belonging to Thomas Plater, the Valaisan. Calvin often went there. Plater, who had come to Basle with Myconius, as we have seen, was at first a student, then a professor, and finally ‘the large sums gained by the printers,’† had given him the desire to become a printer also. When Calvin was looking for a publisher for his *Institutes*, the learned Grynæus recommended Plater to him. The latter had the honour of printing that work, and from that time Calvin kept up an occasional

\* See the Dedicatory Epistle at the beginning of all the editions of the *Institutes*.

† *Vie de Thomas Plater, écrite par lui-même*, p. 110.

intercourse with this singular man. When, some years later, Felix Plater, the son of Thomas, who was going to study medicine at Montpelier, passed through Geneva, Calvin, to whom he brought a letter from his father, called him *my Felix*, and received him with much cordiality. 'I heard him preach on Sunday morning,' said the young man in his memoirs ; 'and there was a great crowd of people.'\*

It was, as we have said, in August 1535, that Calvin handed Thomas Plater his epistle to Francis I. to be printed. He had written it in French, and the French edition bears the date of the 1st of August; but he immediately translated it into Latin and printed this version on the 23rd of the same month, which is the date of the Latin edition.† It is probable that the epistle to Francis I. was printed in both languages, and that the French text was sent to the king, and the Latin to the German doctors, in September 1535.

Did Francis ever receive the letter? Did he listen to this admirable apology? It is certain that his heart was not softened. It is even possible that the pleasures and policy of the monarch made him contemptuously throw aside this appeal from one of the poorest of his subjects. However, nothing prevents us from believing that the king did read it, for the style alone was worthy of a monarch's notice. Calvin's friends, and even Calvin himself, hoped much from it. 'If the king would but read that excellent letter,' said one of them, 'a mortal wound (or we are greatly mis-

\* Autobiography of Felix Plater, son of Thomas.

† Decimo Calendas Septembris.—Latin edition, at the head of the *Institutes*.



taken) would be inflicted on that harlot of Babylon.\* But was an ambitious, false-speaking, and libertine king competent to understand the noble thoughts of the reformer?

Calvin having published his appeal to Francis I., and perhaps ended the correction of the proofs of the *Institutes*, thought of leaving Basle. These publications would make a sensation; it would be known that Catherine Klein's lodger was their author, and Calvin would find himself courted and sought after. . . . 'It is not my object to display myself and to acquire fame,' he said.† The fear of becoming famous induced him, therefore, to get out of the way. He had, however, other reasons, for quitting Basle: he felt himself drawn towards Italy. Shortly after, on the 23rd August 1525, 'Calvin, having discharged his debt to his country,' says Theodore Beza, set off with Du Tillet, shrinking from eulogiums, thanks, and approbation, just as another man would shrink from threats and violence.

The two friends rode side by side, but their itinerary has not been preserved. There are, as every one knows, many passes over the Alps, but that which Calvin chose is as unknown to us as that of Hannibal—though certainly not to be compared with it. It has been supposed that the travellers took the road along the shores of the lake of Geneva. . If they passed through Switzerland, and purposed crossing the St. Bernard (as a manuscript of the 17th century states), or the Simplon, or even Mount Cenis, Calvin must have stood for the first time on the margin of those beautiful

\* 'Magnum meretrici Babylonicæ vulnus illatum,'—Beza, *Vita Calvini*.

† *Préface des Psaumes*.

waters. Be that as it may, he was going to pass the Alps. 'He had a wish,' as Theodore Beza tells us, 'to know the Duchess of Ferrara, a princess of exemplary virtue.' But other motives impelled the young reformer. He desired to see Italy: *Italia salutanda*, as his friend tells us. This desire of 'saluting' Italy, so common to the inhabitants of the rest of Europe from the time when the Roman republic subjected the nations, and which exists still in our days, Calvin felt like any other man.

But what did he go in search of! . . . Whilst he was climbing the Alps and contemplating for the first time their immense glaciers and eternal snows, what thoughts filled his mind? There was some talk then of a council; had that event, which seemed near at hand, anything to do with his journey? As Vergeria had gone from Italy to Germany, in order to support the dominion of the pope, did Calvin wish to go from Switzerland to Italy, in order to assail it? Or attracted by the almost evangelical reputation of Contarini, Sadolet, and other prelates, did he long to converse with them? Did he feel the necessity of seeing closely that papacy, with which he was to deal all his life, and did he propose to study, like Luther, its scandals and abuses? Did he wish to carry back the gospel to that very country to which Paul had taken it? Or was he only attracted by classical recollections, by the learning and civilisation of that illustrious peninsula? There was a little of all these inducements, probably, in Calvin's wish. He desired to visit the land of heroes, martyrs and scholars, of Renée of Ferrara, and . . . of the popes. *Italia salutanda*. But his chief thought, we cannot

doubt, was to teach the principles of the Reformation, to proclaim to Italy that Christ had come to destroy sin, and had opened a way to the heavenly Father for all who seek him. A catholic historian says that the young reformer 'had conceived the design of withdrawing from their obedience to the pope the people nearest to his throne.'\* There is some exaggeration in this statement, but the substance is true.

Calvin crosses the torrents, ascends the sloping valleys of the Alps, climbs yonder high mountains which rise like impassable walls, and moves courageously towards those Italian lands, where the men of the Reformation are soon to be drowned in their blood, where persecution certainly attends him, and perhaps . . . death. It matters not: onward he goes. We might say, after an historian, that like Mithridates, he desires to conquer Rome in Rome.

Let us leave him for a moment and turn towards those countries whither he will come again, once more crossing the Alps, on his escape from the prisons of Italy. After wandering over the adjacent regions, let us direct our steps towards that city which is struggling so manfully with bishops and princes, where courageous forerunners are about to prepare the way for him, and which is to become, through the torch that will be lighted there some day by the hand of Calvin, the most powerful focus of the European Reformation.

\* Varillas, *Hist. des Hérésies*, ii. p. 994.

## BOOK V.

### STRUGGLES OF THE REFORMATION.

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#### CHAPTER I.

##### EFFORTS IN THE PAYS DE VAUD.

(1521.)

STRUGGLES, political or religious, are the normal state of society and the life of history. Their necessity in a christian point of view is established by the highest of authorities: *I am not come to bring peace upon earth but the sword*, said the Saviour of men;\* and one of his disciples sixteen centuries later, developing his master's words, added: 'As the greater part of the world is hostile to the gospel, we cannot confess Christ without encountering opposition and hatred.' †

This thought would be saddening indeed, did not experience and Scripture teach us that opposition is often a means of developement; that the gifts of God to man easily perish if nothing revives them; that contradiction, resistance, and trial (thanks to the care of divine providence) tend to civilise nations, and

\* Matthew, x. 34.

† Calvin *in loco*.



preserve to Christianity the truth, morality, and life it has received from on high.

Whence proceeds this moral influence of contradiction? A principle never evolves all that it contains, says a school, except by coming in collision with a contrary principle. In effect, the blow which a soldier receives on the battle-field adds to his valour. The inflexible obstinacy of Rome in upholding all abuses, excited Luther to display with more energy the great principles of the Reformation. And at Geneva, it was because the huguenots had to contend perpetually against a mean despotism in the State and an incorrigible corruption in the Church, that their souls groaned after liberty and a better religion.

Yet contradiction is not all that is necessary: there must be reconciliation afterwards. The twofold opposition of the huguenots (high-minded as it was) against civil and religious despotism, would have been ruined by its excess and would have ruined Geneva, if it had not been moderated afterwards. It was not good for the State that 'no one was willing to obey.'\* It was not good for religion that opposition to popery should consist in walking about the churches during mass. Modern times needed, from their very cradle, authority in the bosom of a free people, and pure doctrine in the bosom of a living Church. God gave both to Geneva, and he did so essentially through the Reformation.

Care must be taken, however, that we go not too far in the way of accommodation. The Reformation must make no concessions to popery. Whenever it has gone down that easy incline, it has left its calm

\* Bonivard, *Chronique de Genève*, passim.

heights and fallen among quagmires which have endangered its purity and existence.

But that was the conciliation which had to be carried out in those times, and which ought still to be attempted in the Christendom of our times. Between negative protestantism and Roman-catholicism there is a middle path. On the one hand the gospel ought to supply this negative protestantism with what is deficient in it, and on the other to take away from Romanism whatever is erroneous in it. The huguenots, in part at least, were transformed in the city of Calvin by the great principles of the Reformation. It was by the potent virtue of the gospel that this little city, which had been only an Alpine burgh, was so marvellously metamorphosed and became in Europe the capital of a great opinion.

One circumstance, however, tended to compromise its future. The Reform triumphed, but not without losing strength, for the sword struck foul in the struggle. 'If a man strive for mastery, he is not crowned, except he strive lawfully.'\* Calvin understood better than the other reformers the spirituality and independence of the Church; and yet giving way to the general weakness, he had recourse to the secular arm to maintain discipline, and was unable to prevent the death of Servetus. That fatal stake did more injury to truth than to falsehood. From that hour, the doctrine lost its power, a stain soiled its flag, and error seized the advantage of slipping into the ranks of those who were summoned to combat her. Eminent minds were seen abandoning the doctrines of the Reformation, chiefly on account of the civil intoler-

\* 2nd Timothy, ii. 5.

ance by which they were defended. And thus a more or less culpable stagnation followed the powerful activity and glorious battles of the primitive days of the Reformation. There were no more combats round the expiatory cross, the eternal Word, the fall, grace, and regeneration. No more struggles, and therefore no more life. The christian fortress that Calvin had erected having been assailed for two centuries, shaken and dismantled, was on the point of being razed to the ground; when fortunately the struggles, entirely spiritual struggles, began again, and religion was saved by them. When God, after ploughing Europe in the early part of this century with the terrible share of a conqueror, awoke it from its long sleep, he remembered Geneva, and revived there as in other places doctrine and life. That city and all Christendom are now challenged again to the old struggles, and also to new ones, in which faith shall triumph over absolute thorough-going negations, which not only deprive man of the grace and adoption of the children of God, but deny also the immateriality and immortality of the soul.

We shall not begin with the struggles of the Reformation in Geneva, but with those which were fought in a country beautifully situated between the lakes and the mountains,—the Pays de Vaud. The country was not large, its cities were not populous, and the names of the men who struggled there do not occupy an important place in the annals of nations. Let us not forget, however, that there are two kinds of history: the stage of one is a brilliant circle, of the other a humble sphere. The actors in the former are great personages, in the latter men of low esteem

in their own day. But is not the least sometimes the greatest of these two kinds of history? Are not events of small dimensions geometrically similar to great ones? Have they not often a deeper moral significance and a wider practical influence? With truth it may be said of the struggles of Vaud and Geneva: *Magnam causam in parvum locum concludi*, a great cause is here confined within narrow limits. The scenes, so modest and obscure, so full of decision and life, which this history presents, have probably done more to found the kingdom of truth and liberty, than the disputes and wars of powerful potentates. Such a thought as this has been expressed, even in Paris. A contemporary writer, after tracing in his history of the sixteenth century an outline of the portentous future threatened by the intrigues of the papacy, regains his courage with the words: *Europe was saved by Geneva*.\*

All the reformers have been men of strength; but while Luther and Calvin have particularly contended for the principles and doctrines of the Reformation, others, like Knox and Farel, applying themselves to the practice, have specially undertaken to win certain countries or cities to the gospel. The men of God, in all ages, have done both these things; but not one of them has combined the two, like St. Paul. There were two men in that apostle, the doctor and the evangelist. Calvin was the great doctor of the sixteenth century, and Farel the great evangelist: the latter is one of the most remarkable figures in the Reformation.

\* Michelet, *Hist. de France au seizième siècle*.—*La Réforme*, pp. 483, 484, 518.



A catholic in his youth, fanatic in abstinence and maceration, Farel had embraced salvation through grace with all the living ardour of his soul, and from that hour everything appeared to him under a new face. His desire to enlighten his contemporaries was intense, his heart intrepid, his zeal indefatigable, and his ambition for God's glory without bounds. A difficulty never stopped him; a reverse never discouraged him; a sacrifice, even were it that of his life, never alarmed him. He was not a great writer; in his works we meet occasionally with disorder and prolixity; but when he spoke he was almost without an equal. The energetic language which transported his hearers had been derived from the writings of the prophets and apostles; his doctrine was sound, his proofs strong, his expressions significative. Poets are made by nature, orators by art, but preachers by the grace of God; and Farel had the riches of nature, of art, and of grace.\* He never stopped to discuss idle or frivolous questions, but aimed straight at the conscience, and exhibited before those who listened to him the treasures of wisdom, salvation, and life that are found in the Redeemer. Full of love for truth and hatred for falsehood, he inveighed energetically against all human inventions. In his eyes the traditions of popery were a gulf in which horrible darkness reigned, and hence he laboured to extricate souls from it and plant them in the soil of God's Word. His manly eloquence, his lively apostrophes, his bold remonstrances, his noble images, his action frank, expressive, and sometimes threatening, his voice that was often like thunder (as Beza tells us), and his

\* Ancillon, *Vie de Farel*, ch. xi.

fervent prayers, carried away his hearers. His sermon was not a dissertation but an action, quite as much as a battle is. Every time he went into the pulpit, it was to do a work. Like a valiant soldier he was always in front of the column to begin the attack, and never refused battle. Sometimes the boldness of his speech carried by storm the fortress he attacked; sometimes he captivated souls by the divine grace he offered them. He preached in market-places and in churches, he announced Jesus Christ in the homes of the poor and in the councils of nations. His life was a series of battles and victories. Every time he went forth, it was *conquering and to conquer*.\*

It is very true, as we have said, that the cities where he preached were not large capitals; but Derbe, Lystra, and Berea where St. Paul preached, were little towns like Orbe, Neuchâtel, and Geneva. Most assuredly the Acts of the Reformation are not the Acts of the Apostles; there is all the difference between them which exists between the foundation of Christianity and its reformation; but notwithstanding the inferiority of the sixteenth century, the labours of the reformers have a claim upon the interest of all those who love to contemplate the humble origin of the new destinies of mankind. Is there, after the establishment of Christianity, anything greater than its Reformation? Have not those weak movements which began in the petty spheres in which Farel and Calvin lived, gone on widening from age to age? Are they not the origin of that new religious transformation which, notwithstanding the declamations and the triumphant cries of unbelievers, is now going

\* Revelation, vi. 2.

on in every nation of the earth? The source of the Rhone is but a thread of water which would pass unnoticed elsewhere; but the traveller who stands at the foot of the huge glaciers which separate the mountains of the Furka and the Grimsel, cannot look unmoved at that little stream, which, issuing imperceptibly from the earth, is to become a mighty river. The thought of what it is to be inspires the friend of nature and of history in this sublime solitude with emotions more profound than those excited by its copious and monotonous waters at Lyons, Beaucaire, or Avignon. It is for this reason we dwell longer upon the origin of the Reformation.

A general who desires to capture an important city, first makes sure of his position and occupies the surrounding country: and so Farel, desirous of winning Geneva to the gospel, first set about enlightening the neighbouring people. His operations were not strategic certainly; he thought only of converting souls; and yet his labours in the Vaudois towns and villages admirably prepared the way for his successes among the huguenots. We have already seen what he did at Aigle, Neuchâtel, and elsewhere;\* we must now follow him into other parts of that picturesque country, enclosed between the pointed citadels of the Alps and the undulating lines of the Jura, whose waters flow—some by the lake of Neuchâtel, the Aar and the Rhine to the North Sea, others by the lake of Geneva and the Rhone to the Mediterranean: a symbol of the spiritual waters

\* *Hist. of the Reformation of the sixteenth century*, vol. iv. bk. xv. ch. iv, vii, viii, and ix.

which, issuing from the same hills, were soon to bear light and life to the peoples of the north and of the south.

Farel was inactive (a singular thing!) at the moment when we are going to see him prepare betimes for the conquest of Geneva. Wounded near Neuchâtel by a riotous crowd, he had been placed in a boat, and carried across the lake to Morat, as we have said in a former work.\* His friends in that town had welcomed him with emotion, and kept watch around his bed. Condemned to repose, 'shivering with cold, spitting blood,' and scarcely able to speak, he was communing in silence with his God when he saw a young Dauphinese of good appearance, Christopher Fabri by name, enter his room. This Frenchman, of whom we have already spoken, had studied medicine at Montpellier, and there received the first rays of the gospel. Having started for Paris, in order to complete his studies in that city, he met with some friends of the truth at Lyons, who told him of all that was going on at Neuchâtel and its vicinity. Fabri was greatly moved, and being a man of lively, prompt, and decided character, he suddenly changed his route, calling, and life, and instead of going on to Paris turned his steps to Geneva, and thence to Morat.

On arriving at that town, the student enquired after Farel, and on presenting himself at the house, was admitted into the room where the reformer was lying. Modestly approaching the bed, he said to him: 'I have forsaken everything, family, prospects, and country, to fight at your side, Master William.

\* *Hist. of the Reformation*, vol. iv. bk. xv. ch. ix.



Here I am; do with me what seems good to you.' Farel looked at him kindly, and ere long appreciated the young man's lively affection and boundless devotion. He saw that they both had the same faith, the same Saviour. As he was unmarried, he looked upon Fabri as a son whom God had sent him,\* and henceforward had frequent Christian conversations with him, in which he sought to train him for the ministry of the gospel. Farel would have liked to keep him always at his side; but he loved Jesus Christ more than the tenderest son is beloved; and accordingly, after a short but delightful intercourse he asked the converted Dauphinese to go and preach the gospel at Neuchâtel. Fabri, who had not expected so early a separation, exclaimed with tears: 'O master, my sorrow is greater to-day than when I left father and mother, so sweet have been my conversations with you!' He obeyed, however.

Farel was never content with sending others to battle; he burned to return to it in person, and to lead to the heavenly King, whose servant he was, all the population which, enclosed between the Alps and the Jura, spoke the language of his country. He thought that if the intelligent people placed at the gates of France were won over to the divine Word, they would become a focus to cast the light of the gospel into that kingdom, and an asylum where the Christians persecuted by Francis I. might find a refuge.

A town lying at the foot of the lower slopes of the Jura attracted his thoughts during his solitary hours at Morat: this was Orbe. The ancient city of Urba,

\* Choupard MS.

built, it is said, in the same century as Rome, was situated on the Roman way that led from Italy to Gaul. Being rebuilt later some little distance off, the kings of the first race of France, as the people of Orbe boasted, had taken up their residence there, as if, immediately after crossing the Jura, they had exclaimed at the ravishing prospect of the Alps: 'It is enough! we will stop here.' A torrent issuing from the lakes that are found in the high Jurassic valleys plunges into the gigantic clefts of the mountain, and after pursuing a subterranean and mysterious career, reappears on the other slope, towards the plain, whence descending from one fall to another, it gracefully sweeps round the beautiful hill on which the town of Orbe is situated, surrounded with vineyards, gardens, and orchards, 'with all kinds of plants and good things.'\*

A dealer in indulgences, attracted by this wealth, was just at this time noisily selling his pardons for every offence. Farel, still detained at Morat, hearing the sound of his *drum*, as Luther says, made an effort to walk: he left the latter town, and proceeded to Orbe. On the next market-day, being determined to resist the new Tetzels, he quitted his inn and went to the market-place, where he found the indulgence-seller offering his wares with much shouting. The monk, whose eye was always on the watch, soon noticed in the middle of the crowd a little man with a red beard and piercing eyes who caused him some uneasiness. Farel, approaching slowly, took his place quietly before the stall and said to the quack, just as an ordinary purchaser would have done, but

\* See the manuscript *Mémoires du Sire de Pierrefleur, grand banneret d'Orbe*, p. 2, published by M. Verdeil in 1856.

with concentrated anger: 'Have you indulgences for a person who has killed his father and mother?' Without waiting for an answer, and wishing to undeceive the superstitious crowd, he boldly stepped on the basin of the public fountain, and began to preach as if he were in the pulpit. The astonished market-people left the monk and gathered round the new orator, whose sonorous voice entreated the multitude to ask pardon of the Saviour instead of buying indulgences from the monk. As the priests and the devout were exceedingly irritated at both preaching and preacher, Farel could not remain at Orbe; but a few drops of living water had gushed forth, and some souls had had their thirst quenched by them. A tradesman, Christopher Hollard by name, and one Mark Romain, a school-master, were converted to the gospel at this time.

The whole town was in commotion, and the sisters of St. Claire, as bigoted as those of Geneva, entreated their confessor to preach against heresy. Such a request had great weight and must be attended to, for these sisters were held in great consideration. Philippina of Chalons, Louisa of Savoy, recently canonised at Rome, and Yoland, grand-daughter of St. Louis, had assumed the veil in this convent. The struggle might take place more freely in Orbe than in many other Vaudois towns. The Sires of Chateau-Guyon, who possessed the lordship at the time of the war between Switzerland and Burgundy, having taken the part of Charles the Bold, had been deprived of their possessions by the League, and the suzerainty adjudged in 1476 to the cantons of Berne and Friburg. The municipal magistrates, chosen from the principal burgesses or nobles of the city, were good catholics;

but the superior authority belonged to a bailiff, living at Echallens, and who was by turns a Friburger or a Bernese. Now Berne was zealous for the Reform. The friar-confessor, full of confidence in himself, smiled at the flattering request the nuns of St. Claire had made him, and having no mistrust of his eloquence, he said to the banneret, the Sire de Pierrefleur: 'I shall *create* these Lutherans *anew* in the faith, as they were before.' Noble de Pierrefleur, a fervent catholic but a man of good sense, who knew the firmness of the reformers and saw Berne in the background, did not believe that the new *creation*, with which the monk flattered himself, was such an easy thing, and answered: 'I am far from your opinion, father, for such people have more obstinacy than knowledge, and great is the folly of those who desire to remonstrate with them.'\*

Michael Juliani (for that was the friar's name) was not to be stopped by this opinion, and he gave notice of his sermons against the Reform, which were talked about all over the city. The bells rang; priests, monks, and devotees filled the church, and even those suspected of Lutheranism attended. The orator was filled with joy at the sight of the unusual crowd, and his head was turned. Had not his patron saint, the archangel Michael, armed with a golden spear, trampled Satan under his feet; and should he not gain a similar victory? Losing all moderation, he began to extol in the most pompous terms Rome, the priesthood, and celibacy, and to attack the reformers with violence and abuse. Five or six Lutherans were noticed in the church, pen in hand, writing down

\* *Mémoires du Sire de Pierrefleur*, p. 13.



all the father said on a piece of paper which they held on their knees. When the sermon was over, the offended bailiff of Diesbach, the grand banneret and other notables, displeased with the presumptuous discourse, accosted the friar and begged him to desist from abusive language and to preach simply the doctrines of the Church. But in the eyes of certain devout folks, the greater Michael's abuse, the greater his eloquence.

The confessor, delighted at his success, and thinking, as they did in many convents, that knowledge is a sign of the children of the devil (Farel had studied at the university of Paris), and ignorance that of the children of God, went into the pulpit again on the 25th March, and took for his text: *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.* 'Sirs,' he exclaimed, 'the poor in spirit here referred to are the priests and friars. They have not much learning, I confess, but they have what is better; they are mediators between man and God, worshippers of the Virgin Mary, who is the treasure-house of all graces, and friends of the saints who cure all diseases. . . . What then can those want who listen to them? But who are the people who say they are justified by faith? who are they who throw down the crosses on our roads and in our chapels? . . . Enemies of Christ. What are those priests, monks, and nuns who renounce their vows in order to marry?—Unclean, impure, infamous, abominable apostates before men and before God.'\*

The friar was continuing in this strain, when suddenly a loud noise was heard in the church. The

\* *Mém. du Sire de Pierrefleur*, pp. 24-28.

evangelicals present had been excited at the very commencement of the discourse; at first they had restrained themselves, and then whispered to each other; but when the monk began to insult those who thought (as the Bible says) that *marriage is honourable to all men*, one of them, unable to contain himself, stood up and before the whole assembly repeated twice and with sonorous voice, the words: 'You lie!' . . . The orator stopped in amazement, and everybody turned towards the quarter whence these words proceeded. They saw a man of middle age standing there greatly agitated. It was Christopher Hollard, who had been converted by Farel's first sermon, and who combined an honest heart with a violent character. His brother, John Hollard, the late dean of Friburg, had embraced the Reformation and married; Christopher, fancying the monk was reflecting on his brother, had hastened to protest, rather coarsely, it must be acknowledged, but with the frankness of an honest heart, which sees the commandment of God blasphemed.

This exclamation had hardly resounded through the church, when a great uproar, caused by the people, drowned the Lutheran's voice. The men who were present would have rushed from their places upon the disturber; but the women who filled the nave were before them. 'All with one accord fell upon the said Christopher, tore out his beard and beat him; they scratched his face with their nails and otherwise, so that if they had been let alone, he would never have gone out of the said church, which would have been a great benefit for poor catholics.'\* Thus

\* *Mém. du Sire de Pierrefleur*, p. 16.

spoke the grand banneret, who had lost, as it would seem, a little of the moderation he had shown on other occasions. The castellan, Anthony Agasse, was not of his opinion: he wanted the culprits, if there were any, to be punished by the law and not by the populace; and rushing into the midst of this savage scene, he rescued Hollard from the hands of the furies, and threw him 'into a dungeon to avoid a greater scandal.'

## CHAPTER II.

PLOT OF THE WOMEN AGAINST REFORM; FAREL'S PREACHING.

(1531.)

THE Reformation brought great benefits to women. The divine Word which it placed in their hands, and which it desired to see in their hearts, would free them from the dominion of the priest to put them under that of the Saviour; give them that meek and peaceful spirit which (as Calvin says) becomes their sex; and substitute for a religion of external practices an inner, holy, and useful life. However, the women, attached to their priests and ceremonies, and who are easily aroused, were often opposed to the Reform, of which we shall have instances.

Hollard's mother was not of this number. Strongly attached to her son, she gave way to her maternal sorrow. Her son a prisoner, her son without a protector, her son exposed to the vengeance of the exasperated Roman-catholics—thoughts like these caused her the deepest anxiety. She could think of nothing but saving him, ready to incur any danger, and to brave even the anger of the enemies of the gospel. The bailiff of Berne, she said to herself, alone can save Hollard. He lives at Echallens, in a castle, surrounded with his officers; he is a haughty Bernese,



a cold diplomatist perhaps . . . It matters not; the poor woman will go and implore his help. Romain will not abandon her; if there are any difficulties, any dangers, he will be near her; he will protect the mother and deliver the son. Madame Hollard and the schoolmaster set off together for Echallens, and presenting themselves at the castle, inform the bailiff of Diesbach of the monk's insulting address and its consequences. . . . O happiness! the Bernese magistrate is moved, grows angry, and departs immediately. The lord-bailiff felt that the friar's insults were the cause of all the disorder; that by denouncing the married priests and monks as apostates and villains, he had attacked the gospel and the Reformation, recognised by My Lords of Berne; and that the friar was the person to be blamed.\*

Arriving the same day about four o'clock, Diesbach would not go to the guildhall or the castellan's; but sitting down in the open air near the old castle,\* he sent his officers to fetch Friar Juliani. The sergeants carefully searched the convent and several houses without finding the monk, who was hiding in the house of a woman named 'Frances Pugin, instructress of girls in all virtue and learning.' Being informed of the search, he took courage, left the house, and went straight to the bailiff, who was still seated in front of the castle, waiting the result of his enquiries. Friar Michael saluted him respectfully; but the lord of Diesbach, rising up, caught him by the hand and said: 'I arrest you in the name of My Lords,' and then, taking him to the prison, 'drew Hollard out

\* *Mém. du Sire de Pierrefleur*, p. 17.

of his hole and put the said friar in his place.' Such were the energetic proceedings of Berne.

Mark Romain, as pleased at having rescued his friend, 'as if he had gained a thousand crowns, and thinking he had achieved a master-piece,' says a contemporary, was going quietly home. Meanwhile the people, alarmed at the arrival of the bailiff and the imprisonment of the monk, had assembled in the market-place, and spoke of flinging the schoolmaster into the river to punish him for having gone to fetch the *Sieur de Diesbach*. Unfortunately Mark Romain came in sight just at this moment. The townspeople, 'seeing him come joyfully along,' pointed him out to one another. 'There he is,' they said, and began to cry: 'Master, come here!' Romain, observing the tumult, passed suddenly from joy to fear and took to flight, all following in pursuit. They gained upon him: he looked from side to side to see if some door would not open to receive him, but all remained closed. Arriving in front of the church, he rushed into it; but had hardly set his feet inside, when he stopped in astonishment. The women who had desired to tear *Holland* to pieces were in the church, as well as some men, on account of the *Salve Regina* which was said daily at five in the afternoon. Kneeling before the altar, with clasped hands and eyes turned to the ground, they were invoking the *Queen of heaven*: 'Hail, queen of mercy; we send up our groans to thee! O thou who art our advocate, save us!' At the moment when Romain entered, the women turned their heads and caught sight of him; being suddenly changed into furies, they rushed upon him, as they had done before upon *Holland*, 'caught him by the hair, threw him on

the ground, and beat him.' The women were the champions of catholicism in Orbe. The grand banneret looked on quietly at this execution. 'I saw the whole affair,' he said, 'and I did not think the schoolmaster would ever get out alive.' Pierrefleur took care not to go to his help, and the blows continued to fall on poor Romain, until one of his friends arrived. 'I am certain,' says the banneret, who had seen all this without being moved, 'that had it not been for the assistance he received from this Lutheran, he would never have gone out of the place until he was dead.'\* We read in Scripture of people who ceased not to beat St. Paul; Romain, who experienced 'this riotous and cruel rage,' was afterwards a minister of the gospel. He was now going through his apprenticeship.

A mob had collected round the castle in which Friar Michael was confined, and angry voices were heard loudly demanding his liberty. At this moment the bailiff of Diesbach came out to return to his place of residence, having Hollard by his side, whom he was going to restore to his mother. When he saw the crowd he was much astonished, for 'all were crying out and demanding their good father.' 'Why have you arrested Friar Michael?' asked some. 'Why have you delivered Christopher?' asked others. 'By order of My Lords of Berne,' answered the imperturbable bailiff; and then added, pointing to the lofty walls of the castle, 'If you can set him at liberty, you may take him . . . but I advise you not.'† 'We will be bail for our good father, body for body, goods for

\* *Mém. du Sire de Pierrefleur*, p. 19.

† *Ibid.* p. 20.

goods,' exclaimed the burgesses; but the bailiff kept on his way without answering them.

The Sieur of Diesbach had hardly arrived at the great square, when he perceived the ladies and other women of the city waiting for him, their hearts full of sorrow and anguish. They all fell on their knees 'with many tears,' and stretching their hands towards him exclaimed: 'Mercy for the good father! set him at liberty!' These cries softened the Bernese, he stopped and could hardly speak for emotion. He made them understand, however, that it was not in his power to liberate Juliani, and then returned home, for 'the hour was late.'\*

The principal catholics now assembled to consider what was to be done. A priest put in prison in Orbe, for a strictly Romish sermon. . . . What a scandal! They resolved to appeal from the heretical Bernese bailiff to the Friburgers who were good catholics. The grand banneret volunteered for this important mission, and next day Noble P. de Pierrefleur and Francis Vuerney set out for Friburg, where they related everything to the council. The lords and princes of that city were much 'concerned and vexed,' and a deputation composed of Bernese and Friburgers received instructions to arrange the difference. But this measure, far from diminishing the struggle, was destined to increase it. As the deputation passed through Avenches, a Roman city older than the Cæsars, they fell in with Farel, who for more than a month had been preaching the gospel there, amid its ruined aqueducts and amphitheatres, and had met with nothing but lukewarmness. Without hesitation

\* *Mém. du Sire de Pierrefleur*, p. 19.



the evangelist left Avenches, and departing with the Bernese arrived at the banks of the Orbe, whither the noise of battle attracted him. No ruins were to be seen there: but seven churches and twenty-six altars testified to the ancient splendour and Romish fervour of the city.

It was the 2nd of April, Palm-Sunday. Mass had been celebrated, the various offices had been said, even to vespers. Farel, who had stayed quietly in doors, observing that the service was over, left his inn 'with presumptuous boldness.' His friends followed him, idlers flocked round him, the devout ran after, and a crowd of men, women, and children soon filled the church with a great noise. Then 'without asking leave of any one, Farel went into the pulpit to preach.' But he had scarcely opened his mouth, when everybody, 'men, women, and children, hissed, howled, and stamped with all sorts of exclamations to disconcert him. Dog, they cried; lubber, heretic, devil, and other insults: it was a glorious noise.' 'You really could not have heard God's thunder,' said Pierrefleur. Farel, who was accustomed to tumult, as a soldier to the whistling of the bullets, continued his address. Anger got the better of some of them. 'Seeing that he would not desist, they grew riotous, surrounded the pulpit, pulled him out of it, and would even have proceeded to blows.' The confusion was at its height, when the bailiff, 'fearing that worse would follow,' rushed into the midst of the crowd, took the reformer by the arm, and escorted him to his lodging.

The mixed commission was empowered to restore peace to this agitated city; but as for Farel he had but one idea: *Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel.*

If he cannot preach it in the church, he will do so in the open air. On the following day (Monday) he left the house of his entertainer at six in the morning, and proceeding towards the great square, began to preach. There was nobody present; it mattered not; he thought that his powerful voice would soon collect a good assembly. But satisfied with the victory of the evening before, the inhabitants of Orbe had said to themselves that they would leave the preacher alone: he had not a single hearer.\* That was not, however, the only reason: a plot was concerting against Farel—a women's plot naturally; for the men in general were cold in comparison with the other sex.

There was a noble dame at Orbe, a native of Friburg, Elizabeth, wife of Hugonin, lord of Arnex, an honest and devout woman, but enthusiastic, violent, and fanatical. Elizabeth, being persuaded that the death of the reformer would be a very meritorious work, had assembled at her house some other bigoted women, had addressed them, and worked upon them, so that they had agreed to beat the reformer and even kill him: they only waited for an opportunity. The same day at four in the afternoon a city council was held at which the deputies of Berne and Friburg and even Farel also were present. When the council was over, the reformer came out: it was the moment that Elizabeth and her accomplices, informed of the circumstance, had selected to carry out their plot. A gentleman, Pierre de Glairese, knowing the danger the evangelist ran, quitted the council after him, and

\* *Mém. du Sire de Pierrefleur*, pp. 21, 22.

begged permission to accompany him. Meanwhile the women who had left their houses were waiting for Farel in the middle of a street through which he must necessarily pass. Approaching them without any mistrust, they fell upon him unawares, 'and took him by the cloak *so gently*,' says the chronicler ironically, 'that they made him stagger and fall.' They then attempted to ill-treat him and beat him; but Pierre de Glairese rushing in between them, took him out of their hands, and said, bowing to them very politely: 'Your pardon, ladies; at present he is under my charge.' They all let go of him, and Glairese conducted him to the inn where My Lords of Berne awaited him.

While Elizabeth was trying to kill the reformer, her husband, William of Arnex, as bigoted as herself, was pleading the cause of the monk. The mediators had ordered that Friar Michael should be put on his trial. He was taken to the castle in agitation and alarm, and the lords of Berne, bringing a criminal charge against him, said: 'You asserted that the poor in spirit are the monks.'

*Friar Michael*: 'I deny it.'

'You said that to resist the pope, the bishops, and other ecclesiastics is resisting the commandment of God.'

*Friar*. 'I deny saying it in those terms.'

'You said that few follow the new law, except a heap of lascivious monks.'

*Friar*. 'I deny having said it in that way, and I named nobody.'

'You said that when priests marry, the women they take are not their wives but their harlots, and that their children are bastards.'

*Friar.* 'I confess it.'

'You said that Mary was the treasure-house of graces.'

*Friar.* 'I did.'

'You said the saints, like St. Anthony, expel and cure certain diseases.'

*Friar.* 'I did.'

'You said that those who deny that the books of the Maccabees form part of Holy Scripture, are heretics.'

*Friar.* 'I did.'

'You said that those who have adopted the new law have no good in them, and deny the articles of faith.'

*Friar.* 'I did not.'\*

This mixture of denials and confessions disarmed the judges. They listened to the solicitations of D'Arnex and set Juliani at liberty. The Bernese, however, bound him to preach in future nothing but the Word of God. 'Most honoured lords,' exclaimed the poor friar, 'I have never preached anything that is not found in the holy gospel, in the epistles of St. Paul, or in some other part of Holy Scripture.' Friar Michael, confounded at not gaining a triumph as striking as that of his patron with the brilliant helmet, and fearing lest he should be sent back to prison, thought only of saving himself. He entered the convent for a short time, and then fled into Burgundy.† The deputies returned home and Farel remained.

Shortly after Easter there came a mandate from

\* 'Negat dixisse.'—*Mém. du Sire de Pierrefleur*, pp. 24–28.

*Mém. du Sire de Pierrefleur*, pp. 21–32.



Berne ordering that whenever Farel desired to preach, he should be given a hearing, support, and favour. As soon as the mandate had been read, the people, without waiting for the opinion of the Council, exclaimed, 'Let him go about his business, we do not want him or his preaching.' The lords of Berne answered that Farel was to be free to speak, but that no inhabitant was constrained to hear him. The evangelist gave notice that he would preach on the Saturday after Quasimodo, at one o'clock, when he would expose Juliani's errors.

The catholics, not content with the permission given them to keep away, determined to organise a reception for Farel that should disgust him for ever with preaching. As soon as the minister entered the church the strangest of congregations met his eyes: all the brats (*marmaille*) of the place were assembled; lying in front of the pulpit and all round it, the children pretended to be asleep, snoring and laughing in their sleeves. Farel observing three persons who appeared to be serious, went into the pulpit and said, pointing to the little ragamuffins: 'How many weapons Satan has provided to hinder our cause! Never mind, we must surmount every obstacle.' Being determined to refute Friar Michael, he began his discourse; but on a sudden the children started to their feet, as sharp-shooters lying flat behind the bushes start up at the approach of the enemy, and salute him with their fire. The young scamps exerted their lungs, howling and shouting with all their might, and at last quitted the church with a horrible uproar. 'Nobody was left but the minister, quite amazed. And this was the first sermon preached

in the town of Orbe,' says the grand banneret maliciously.\*

The next day, Sunday, there was a great procession. Priests, monks, and all the parish, chanting as loud as they could, proceeded according to custom to St. George's, outside the town. Farel profited by the departure of the enemy to seize upon the place, and the last parishioner had hardly crossed the threshold of the church, when he entered it, followed by his friends, went up into the pulpit, and loudly declared the truth. Ten evangelicals, Viret, Hollard, Secretan, Romain, and six of their friends, composed the whole of his congregation. Meanwhile the procession was on its way back. First appeared the children two and two, then the exorcist with the holy water and the sprinkler, then came the priests, magistrates, and people, all singing the litany. The children, seeing the minister in the pulpit, and remembering the lesson they had received, rushed into the church, whistling, howling, and shouting as on the evening before. The priests and people who followed them made threatening motions, and Farel, understanding that the storm was about to burst, showed a moderation he did not always possess, came down from the pulpit and went out. †

The clergy exulted : they ascribed Farel's retreat to weakness and fear, and said openly in the city : 'The minister cannot refute the articles of faith established by Juliani.' 'Indeed,' answered the Bernese bailiff, 'you have heard the monk and you now complain that you have not heard the minister. . . . Very good ! you shall hear him. It is the will of

\* *Mém. du Sire de Pierrefleur*, p. 35.

† *Ibid.*

the lords of Berne that every father of a family be required to attend his sermon under pain of their displeasure.'

They dared not disobey, and the church was thronged. Filled with joy at the sight of such a congregation, Farel ascended the pulpit: never had he been clearer, more energetic and more eloquent. He passed in review all the subjects of which Juliani had treated; at one time attacking the pardons which the Romish Church sells to credulous souls, at another the doctrine which assigns the keys of heaven to St. Peter. 'The key of the kingdom of heaven,' he said, 'is the Word of God—the Holy Gospel.' One day Farel spoke of the stupid practices imposed upon catholics under the name of penance. 'The penance which God demands,' he said, 'is a change of heart, life, and conversation.'\* Another day he battled with indulgences: 'The pope's pardons take away *money*,' he said, 'but they do not take away *sin*. Let every christian be aware that nobody can escape the anger of God, except through Jesus.'† He thundered against auricular confession: 'Confession in the priest's ears which the pope commands,' he said, 'helps him to learn the secrets of kings and aids him in catching countries and kingdoms. But how many souls have been cast into hell by it! how many virgins corrupted! how many widows devoured! how many orphans ruined! how many princes poisoned! how many countries wasted! how many large establishments

\* *Sommaire*, &c., par G. Farel, p. 191. We give Farel's exact expressions on the subjects handled by Juliani, just as they are found in his writings, without being able to say that they were precisely those he employed on this occasion.

† *Ibid.* p. 125.

of men and women given up to debauchery. . . . O Heaven, unveil these accursed horrors! O Earth, cry out! Creatures of God, weep; and do thou, O Lord, arise!' \*

Farel, without possessing the iconoclastic ardour which Hollar displayed ere long, was indignant at the worship paid to the images of the saints, and strove against them with the arms of the Word. 'The people,' he said, 'set candles before the saints who are out of this world and have nothing to do with them. . . . While if those saints were alive and had need of a light to read the Gospel by, instead of giving them candles, you would tear out their eyes!' . . . Then scandalised at the disorderly living of the world and the Church, the christian orator exclaimed: 'Farces full of scoffing, filth, and ribaldry: obscene and idle songs, books full of vanity, lewdness, falsehood and blasphemy, wicked and illicit conversations . . . all this is suffered openly. . . . But the New Testament which contains the doctrine and passion of Christ is forbidden, as if it were the Koran of Mahomet, or a book of witchcraft and enchantment. . . . O Sun, canst thou pour thy light on such countries? O Earth, canst thou give thy fruits to such people? And thou, O Lord God, is thy vengeance so slow against such a great outrage? Arise, O Lord, and let the trumpet of thy holy Gospel be heard unto the ends of the earth.' †

Although the catholics were indignant, and not without reason, at the order from Berne, which obliged them to attend the sermons opposed to their

\* Farel, *Sommaire*, pp. 96, 191, 210.

† Ibid. p. 154.



faith, the reformer preached without difficulty the first and second day; but on the third, the alarmed priests harangued their flocks and thundered from their pulpits against the heretical discourses; and from that time Farel counted few hearers in the church besides the friends of the Gospel. The bailiff had the good sense not to observe this disobedience.

The surrounding districts compensated Farel for the contempt of Orbe. His reputation having spread into the neighbouring villages, the people eagerly desired to hear him. Receiving message after message, and touched at the sight of these worthy peasants knocking at his door, he wrote to Zwingle: 'Oh! how great is the harvest! No one can describe the ardour the people feel for the Gospel, and the tears I shed when I see the small number of reapers.'\* Several of the evangelicals of Orbe asked to be sent out to preach, but Farel, thinking them not ripe enough, refused. There were some who took offence at this, but it did not move Farel. 'It is better to offend them,' he said, 'than to offend God.'

Saint Paul said: *Lay hands suddenly on no man.* Farel and the other reformers desired that the minister should honour his ministry. He required above all things a converted heart, but that was not enough. It is a bad sign when the Church admits into the number of those who are to point out the gate of salvation, either men who have not passed through it or who have not the gift of the Word, or are deficient in wisdom. But if the leaders of the Church are faithful, God will send them true ministers.

\* 'Quanta sit messis, quis populi ardor in Evangelium, paucis nemo expresserit. Sed paucitatem operariorum deflere cogimur.'—*Farellus Zwinglio*, Orba, anno 1531. *Ep.* ii. p. 648.

## CHAPTER III.

## A NEW REFORMER AND AN IMAGE-BREAKER.

(1531.)

IN 1511 William Viret, a burgess of Orbe, 'cloth-dresser and tailor,' had a son born to him whom he named Peter. The boy had grown up in the midst of the wool-combers, and had watched his father's workmen as they pressed, or glossed, or fulled the cloths as they came from the hands of the weavers. But he took no delight in this, for he was not born a tradesman. It was the inner man that was to be developed in him: he felt within himself a necessity for seeking God, which impelled him towards heaven. He sought the society of the best-informed burgesses, and even had some relations with the nobles;\* but the first object of his wishes was God. If he took a walk alone, or with one of his brothers Anthony and John, along the picturesque banks of the Orbe, through the charming country bathed by its waters, and even to the foot of the Jura,† he looked around him with delight, but afterwards lifted his eyes to heaven. 'I was naturally given to religion,' he said, 'of which however I was

\* 'Moy qui suis nay, et ay esté dès mon enfance nourry au milieu de vous.'—*Ep. de Viret aux nobles et bourgeois d'Orbe*, p. 13.

† These districts have been admirably described in a recent work—*Horizons prochains*.

then ignorant. . . . I was preparing myself for heaven, seeing that it was the way of salvation.’\* He resolved to devote himself to the service of the altar, which his father did not oppose, townspeople and peasantry alike regarding it as an honour to count a priest among their children. Peter, who had a good understanding and memory, soon learnt all that was taught in the school at Orbe, and turned his eyes towards the University of Paris, that great light which twelve years before had attracted Farel’s footsteps. His father, whose trade had placed him in easy circumstances, consented to send him to Paris, whither the boy proceeded in 1523, being then a little over twelve years of age. The same year and about the same time John Calvin of Noyon, who was two years older than Viret, arrived in the same city and entered the college of La Marche. Did these two boys, who were one day to be so closely united, meet then, and did their friendship begin with their childhood? We have not been able to satisfy ourselves on the point.

Viret distinguished himself at college by his love of study; ‘he made good progress in learning;’ and also by his devotion to the practices of the Roman Church. ‘I cannot deny,’ he said, ‘that I went pretty deep into that Babylon.’† In one of the last visits he made to Paris, Farel seems to have remarked Viret, whose charming modesty easily won the heart, and to have helped in freeing the young Swiss from the darkness in which he still lay. The Gospel penetrated the soul of the youthful scholar of Orbe almost at the same time as it enlightened the

\* *Disputations Chrestiennes*, par Pierre Viret, Geniève, 1544. *Préface*.

† *Ibid.* *Préface*.

large understanding of the scholar of Noyon. The mildness of his character softened the struggles which had been so fierce in Farel and Calvin. And yet he too had to tread the path of anguish to arrive at peace. Perceiving a frightful abyss and an eternal night beneath his feet, he threw himself into the arms of the Deliverer who was calling him: 'While still at college,' he said, 'God took me out of the labyrinth of error before I had sunk deeper into that Babylon of Antichrist.'\* The time having arrived when he should receive the tonsure, he felt that he must make up his mind: the struggle was not a long one; he refused, and was immediately 'set down as belonging to the Lutheran religion.'† Foreseeing what awaited him, he hastily quitted Paris and France, and 'returned to his father's house.' In after years he exclaimed: 'I thank God that the mark and sign of the beast were not set upon my forehead.'‡

Viret found Orbe greatly changed; the contest then going on between the gospel and popery intimidated him at first. His was one of those reflective souls which, absorbed by the struggles within, naturally shrink from those without. Like other reformers, he had a difficulty in quitting the body of catholicity, but a severe conscience obliged him to seek truth at any sacrifice. Sometimes the Church of Rome, with all its errors and abuses, alone struck his imagination, and he would exclaim with emotion: 'It is the stronghold of superstition, the fortress of Satan.'§ Then all

\* *Disputations Chrestiennes. Préface.*

† *Mém. du Sire de Pierrefleur*, p. 37.

‡ *Disputations Chrestiennes. Préface.*

§ 'Arcem illam superstitionis et idolatriæ, et Satane propugnacula. Viret, *De verbi Dei ministerio*, Senatui Lausan. Ep.



of a sudden and before he had time to defend himself, the old system of catholicism resumed its power over him, and he found himself in anguish and darkness. He struggled and prayed: the truth, for a moment hidden, reappeared before his eyes, and he said: 'Rome asserts that antiquity is truth; but what is there older in the world than lies, rebellion, murder, extortion, impurity, idolatry, and all kinds of wickedness and abomination? . . . To follow the doctrine of Cain and of Sodom is verily to follow an old doctrine. . . . But virtue, truth, holiness, innocence, and thou, O God which art the Father of them all, are older still!'\*

The priests of Orbe, who were strongly attached to the Romish doctrine, seeing the cloth-dresser's son often solitary and full of care, began to grow uneasy about him: they accosted him and spoke of the old doctors, of the testimony of the saints, of Augustin, Cyprian, Chrysostom, and Jerome. These testimonies had much weight in Viret's mind. His head was bewildered, his feet slipped, and he was on the point of falling back into the gulf, when snatching again at the word of God, he clung to it, saying: 'No, I will not believe because of Tertullian or Cyprian, or Origen, or Chrysostom, or Peter Lombard, or Thomas Aquinas, not even because of Erasmus or Luther. . . . If I did so, I should be the disciple of men. . . . I will believe only Jesus Christ my Shepherd.'†

At length the divine Word delivered Viret from the theocratic dominion of Rome, and he then began to look around him. . . . Alas! what did he see? Chains everywhere, prisoners held fast 'in the citadel of idolatry.' He felt the tenderest affection for the captives

\* *Disp. Chrest.* p. 9.

† *Ibid.* pp. 195-6.

‘ Since the Lord has brought me *out*,’ he said, ‘ I cannot forget those who are *within*.’\* Two of these prisoners were never out of his thoughts: they were his father and mother. At one time absorbed by the cares of business, at another mechanically attending divine service, they did not seek after the one thing needful. The pious son began to pray earnestly for his parents, to show them increased respect, to read them a few passages of Holy Scripture, and to speak gently to them of the Saviour. They felt attracted by his conduct, and the faith he professed took hold of their hearts. The grateful Viret was able to say: ‘ I have much occasion to give thanks to God in that it hath pleased him to make use of me to bring my father and mother to the knowledge of the Son of God. . . . Ah! if he had made my ministry of no other use, I should have had good cause to bless him.’†

As soon as Viret met Farel again at Orbe, he immediately became one of the evangelist’s hearers, and ere long took his father along with him. The most intimate union sprung up between these men of God. One completed the other. If Farel was ardent, intrepid, and almost rash, Viret ‘ had a wondrously meek temper.’‡ There was in him a grace that won the heart, and a christian sensibility that was really touching; and yet, like Farel and Calvin, he was firm in doctrine and morals. Farel, always eager to send workmen into the harvest, persuaded his friend to preach not only in the country but in Orbe itself. The young and timid Viret recoiled from the task Farel proposed to him; but the reformer pressed him, as others had pressed Luther

\* *Disp. Chrest.* Préface.

† Viret: *Du vrai ministère de la vraie Eglise de Jésus-Christ.* Préface.

‡ Théod. de Bèze.

and Calvin; he believed that Viret, who belonged to the city, and was loved by everybody, would receive a favourable welcome. The thought of the divine grace, the strength of which he knew, decided Viret. 'Let it not be my mouth which persuades,' he said, 'but the mouth of Jesus Christ; for it is Jesus Christ who pierces the heart with the fiery arrow of his Spirit.'\*

On the 6th May 1531 an unusual crowd, not only of townspeople but of persons from the neighbourhood, filled the church of Orbe; the son of one of the most respected of the burgesses, a child of the place, was to enter the pulpit. He was accused of being rather heretical, but he was so inoffensive, that nobody would believe it; and besides, many of the young folks of Orbe, who had sported with him on the banks of the river, wished to see their old playfellow in the pulpit. The congregation, who were waiting impatiently, saw the young man appear at last: he was of small stature and pale complexion, his face thin and long, his eyes lively, and the whole expression meek and winning;† he was only twenty years old, but appeared to be younger still. He preached: his sermon was accompanied by so much unction and learning, his language was so persuasive, his eloquence so searching and penetrating, that even the most worldly men were attracted by his discourse and hung, as it were, upon his lips.‡ The proverb 'No man is a prophet in his own country' was not exemplified in Viret's case. The 6th of May

\* Viret: *Du vray ministère*, pp. 47, 57.

† 'Fuit corpusculo imbecillo, moribus suavis.'—Melchior Adam, *Vitæ erudit.*

‡ 'Oris præcipue facundia excellens, ut homines etiam religioni minus addictos, faciles tamen auditores habuerit, cum omnes ab ejus ore penderent.'—*Ibid.*

was a great day for him. All his life through he preserved the recollection of his first sermons. Thirty years later he said to the nobles and burgesses of Orbe: 'Your church was the first in which God was pleased to make use of my ministry, when it was still in its youth, and I was very young.'\*

From that day Viret took his place in that noble army of heralds of the Word which the Lord was raising among the nations. His part in it was modest but well marked. The college of reformers, as well as the college of the apostles, contained the most different characters. As the sap is everywhere the same in nature, the Spirit of God is everywhere the same in the Church; but everywhere alike each of them produces different flowers and different fruits. The ardent Farel was the St. Peter of the Swiss Reform, the mighty Calvin the St. Paul, and the gentle Viret the St. John.

Farel, Viret, Romain, Hollard, and the other evangelicals waited for the effects of the preaching at Orbe. They saw clearly 'some slight touches and pricks, but few persons had been wounded and pierced to the quick,' and so overwhelmed with the feeling of everlasting death, that they thought of looking for help solely to the grace of Jesus Christ. All of a sudden, and a month only after Farel's arrival, the report of an unexpected conversion filled Orbe with astonishment, and became the subject of general conversation. It was said—and he who repeated it could hardly believe it—that Madame Elizabeth, the wife of the lord of Arnex, the very same who had planned the women's conspiracy and so severely beaten Farel, was entirely

\* *Du combat des hommes contre leur propre salut*, pp. 7-8.



changed; that even her husband, who had become bail for Juliani, and had set him at liberty, had changed likewise. The bigots of both sexes could not deny the fact. 'Really,' they said, 'she has become one of the worst lutherans in the city.' Not long after, they made a great noise because at All Saints or some feast of Our Lady, Elizabeth had a large wash or other manual labours at her house.\* They shook their heads, shrugged their shoulders, and smiled. The evangelicals did not imitate them: they thought, to borrow the language of one of their leaders, that though these iron-hearted people smiled, it was a forced smile,† for they felt as if inwardly choking. . . . They knew that God's word is a hammer, and that there is nothing so hard, so massive, or so hidden in the heart of man that its power cannot reach. . . . Had not Paul been a persecutor like Elizabeth and Hugonin?

Worse still, at least in the opinion of the catholics, happened ere long. One of the ecclesiastics of the place was George Grivay, surnamed Calley, an excellent musician who had been appointed precentor. He had been trained by a fervent catholic mother, and had received a good education in the church.‡ In order to receive further instruction his parents had sent him to Lausanne, where he had been made chorister and had particularly improved in the knowledge of music. On his return to Orbe the nobles and priests had given him a flattering reception; and he deserved it, for he enchanted the people by his singing

\* *Mém. du Sire de Pierrefleur*, pp. 133-134.

† Un ris d'hôtelier.

‡ *Mém. du Sire de Pierrefleur*, pp. 263.

or electrified them by his discourses. But on the 10th May 1531, the same month in which Viret delivered his first sermon, Grivat had gone up into the pulpit and astonished his hearers by preaching the evangelical doctrine in the clearest manner. This was too much ; his father and his brothers were in despair ; nobles and friends who had received him so well exclaimed in great irritation : ‘ Have we not given him good wages ; has not the Church fed and taught him ? and now he wants to imitate the cuckoo that eats the mother who reared it.’ \*

As these successive conversions gave the evangelicals more courage, they took an important step. Feeling the necessity of being strengthened in the faith by the celebration of the Lord’s Supper, they asked for it, and Farel, who was then at Morat, immediately returned to Orbe. On Whitsunday (28th May) at six in the morning—an hour selected to insure tranquillity for the act they were about to perform—he announced to a numerous assembly collected in the church the remission of all sins by the breaking of Christ’s body on the cross ; and as soon as the sermon was ended, eight disciples came forward to break bread. They were Hugonin of Arnex and his wife, C. Hollard and his aged mother, Cordey and his wife, William Viret, Peter’s father, and George Grivat, afterwards pastor at Avenches ; many of the evangelicals did not think themselves sufficiently advanced in the faith to take part in this act, and doubtless Peter Viret was absent. Two of the eight disciples modestly spread a white cloth over a bench, on which they placed the bread and wine.

\* *Mém. du Sire de Pierrefleur*, p. 41.

Farel sank on his knees and prayed, all following his prayer in their hearts. When the minister rose up he asked: 'Do you each forgive one another?' . . . and the believers answered Yes. Next Farel broke off a morsel of bread for each, saying he gave it them in memory of Christ's passion, and after that he handed them the cup.' The minister and these true disciples possessed by faith the real presence of Jesus in their hearts. They had hardly finished when the exasperated priests entered the church hastily and sang the mass as loud as they could. The next day, Whitmonday, there was a fresh scandal: the evangelicals were at work. 'Ha!' said many indignantly; 'they keep no holiday, *except the Sunday!*'\*

If the evangelisation had continued in a peaceful course of christian edification, the city would in all probability have been entirely gained over; but the Reformation had its 'enfants terribles.' Calvin said in vain: 'Those who are wise according to God are modest, peaceable, and gentle. They do not conceal vices; they endeavour rather to correct them, but provided it be in peace, that is to say, with so much moderation that unity remains unbroken. Peaceable and loving representations ought not to be laid aside, and those who desire to be physicians must not be executioners.'†

A fine stone crucifix in St. Germain's cemetery had been thrown down, and another, which stood at a cross road near the city, had been destroyed: but this had been done at night and it was not known by whom. Ere long the ardent reformers grew bolder, and

\* We are indebted to the catholic Pierrefleur for these particulars. *Mémoires*, p. 44.

† Calvin, *Op.* S. Jacques, iv. 18.

especially Christopher Hollard, a true iconoclast of the Reform, who thought more of pulling down than of building up. One day, as Farel was preaching before the deputies of Berne and Friburg, Hollard flew at an image of the Virgin and dashed it to pieces. Another day he threw down the great altar of the church of Our Lady. This was not enough.

According to Hollard, whose mind was upright, and even pious, but ardent, extreme, and rather deficient in judgment, the Reformation, that is to say, the destruction of images and altars, did not go on fast enough, and he therefore resolved to carry it out on a grand scale. He took twelve companions with him; and these agents of the judgments of God (as they thought themselves), going from street to street and from church to church, 'pulled down all the altars' in the seven churches of the city; twenty-six heaps of rubbish bore witness to their triumph. They could say, no doubt, that all worship paid to an image is a relic of paganism; but their fault was to suppose that catholics ought to adore God, not according to their catholic conscience, but according to that of the reformed protestants. The people looked at each other with alarm, but said nothing. 'I was greatly astonished,' says De Pierrefleur, 'at the patience of the populace.' 'Sir banneret,' observed some catholics, 'if we did not feel great loyalty towards our lords of Berne, the body of Christopher Hollard would not have touched earth;' that is to say, they would have hanged him. These combatants were pretty well matched for gentleness. The catholics set up tables in the place of the altars, upon which they celebrated mass 'rather meanly.'\*

\* *Mém. du Sire de Pierrefleur*, pp. 41-42, 50-51.



The intolerance of Christopher Hollard and of one of his friends, named Tavel, threatened to substitute a new tyranny for the ancient tyranny of popery. Alas! the protestant clergy have sometimes been known to oppose the disciples and doctrines of the gospel, just as the Romish clergy would have done. Intolerance is a vice of human nature which even piety does not always cure. The priests saying mass at their little tables offended Hollard and Tavel. Agasse was no longer governor; he had been removed by the influence of Berne, and Anthony Secretan, one of the reformed, put in his place. The two fiery Lutherans laid a complaint before him against all priests as being murderers (of souls); and according to the custom of the age, surrendered themselves prisoners. The governor ordered the Roman ecclesiastics to be arrested, which was no easy matter, for there were some sturdy fellows among them. Three sergeants having attempted to seize Messire Pierre Bovey in the street, the stout priest 'dragged them into the passage of a house,' and there beat them so that they were glad to escape out of his hands. Having thus defended himself like a lion, he remained free; but it was not so with Blaise Foret, the curé, who 'went like a sheep straight to prison.' The officers put him along with the rest, who were 'well treated at bed and board, with permission to go all over the castle.'\* Some bold priests (for they were not all shut up) chanted mass at five o'clock in the morning, notwithstanding the prohibition. The catholics attended 'armed with pikes, halberds, and clubs; and rang the

\* *Mém. du Sire de Pierrefleur*, pp. 52-53.

bells as if the city were on fire.' Before long the intolerant protestants received a severe and well merited lesson.

The grand banneret Pierrefleur, who was a man of the world, well read, of a cultivated mind, charming simplicity, and profound intelligence, combined great decision of character with Vaudois good-temper. Being a catholic from conviction, and knowing that the majority of the inhabitants were for the Roman faith, and disgusted at seeing the priests in prison and the faithful compelled to hear mass almost in secret, he summoned a general council of the people. 'Will you,' he asked them, 'will you have the mass, and live and die in the holy faith, like your forefathers? If you do wish it, let every one hold up his finger, and if perchance there should be any one of a contrary opinion, let him leave the assembly.' Every one raised his finger in token of an oath, whereupon the Friburgers sent a herald to Orbe. The priests were taken out of prison, and those who had helped to pull down the altars were put in their place. There were fifteen in all, and among them was Elizabeth's husband, the noble Hugonin of Arnex. They were not so well treated at 'bed and board' as the priests had been, but were put on bread and water; after three days, however, they were allowed to return home.\* During this time the priests and fervent catholics were restoring the altars everywhere. It required more than twenty years for the Reform in Orbe to recover from the blow inflicted on it by the intolerance of Hollard and his friends. It was not until 1554 that an assembly of the people

\* *Mém. du Sire de Pierrefleur*, p. 56.

decided by a majority of eighteen votes in favour of the establishment of evangelical worship. The priests, nuns, and friars then left the city for ever, amid the tears of their supporters.\*

\* ‘Vicerunt nostri octodecim suffragiis.’—Viret to Calvin, 11th August, 1554. See also Pierrefleur, p. 297.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE BATTLES OF GRANDSON.

(1531—1532.)

FAREL'S zeal was not cooled by the check he had received at Orbe; he saw before him other places that must be evangelised. If he withstood the ambitious demands of the new converts who, like Hollard, fancied themselves more capable than they really were, and indiscreetly sought for consecration to the holy office, he did but seek with more zeal for servants of God, who possessed a spirit of strength, charity, and prudence. Certain men appeared to him to have been ripened in France by persecution. He invited into Switzerland Toussaint, Lecomte, Symphoranus, Andronicus, and others. As soon as these brethren arrived, he sent them into the harvest;\* and frequently after fervent prayers he seemed to see the whole valley enclosed between the Jura and the Alps filled with the living waters of the Gospel. 'Of a truth,' said he, 'if we look at the times that have gone before, the work of Christ is glorious now. . . . And yet what roots remain to be torn up before the field is ready

\* 'Fratres qui huc venerunt in messem missi sunt.'—Farellus Andronico, Jan. 27, 1531. Choupard MSS.



to receive the divine seed.\* What works to be accomplished, what toils to be endured, what enemies to be overcome! . . . We have need of labourers inured to labour. . . . I cannot promise them mountains of gold,† but I know that the Father will never abandon His own, and that He will give them an abundant harvest.'

In Farel's heart overwhelming depression often followed close upon the fairest expectations. One sorrow especially afflicted him: the malady of petty questions seemed threatening to invade the new Church. At all times narrow and ill-balanced minds attach themselves to certain details in the doctrine of baptism, the Lord's Supper, the ministry, and so forth: they are eager about *anise and cummin*‡ and by their minutiae encumber the kingdom of Christ. Farel, who with a holy doctrine and unwearied activity combined a wise discernment and a large liberal spirit, trembled lest this weakness of little understandings had crept into the minds of the ministers to whom he addressed his call. There happened to be at Strasburg just then a christian man named Andronicus, whom the reformer desired to attract into Switzerland; but he wished to know whether he was tainted with formalism or fanaticism—two evils which sometimes met on the banks of the Rhine. He resolved to speak frankly to him, and his letter shows us his opinion of the ministry: 'Dear brother,' he wrote to Andronicus, 'do you possess Christ so as to

\* 'Quam difficiles eradicatu supersunt radices, antequam novale jaciendo semini sit idoneum.'—Farellus Andronico, Jan. 27, 1531. Choupard MSS.

† 'Aureos montes polliceri nolo.'—Ibid.

‡ Matthew xxiii. 23.

teach Him purely, apart from the empty controversies of *bread* and *water*, *taxes* and *tithes*, which in the eyes of many constitute Christianity? \* Are you content to require of all that, renouncing ungodliness and unrighteousness, they should arm themselves with faith, and press to their hearts the heavenly treasure, Christ who sitteth at the right hand of the Father? Are you ready to give to all authorities what is their due—taxes, tithes—to pay them not only to the ungodly, but also to the brethren? Do you seek Christ's glory only? Do you propose simply to plant in their hearts the faith that worketh by charity? Are you resolved to bear the cross? for, be assured, the cross awaits you at the door. If you are ready to bear it, then, dear brother, come instantly.' Such was the wise language of the most ardent of the reformers.

While Farel was thus loudly calling for new workers, he was getting rid of the idle and cowardly, promising to all of them fatigue, insult, and persecution: it was with such promises that the reformer levied his soldiers. 'Do not look for idleness, but for labour,' † he said; 'only after fatigue will you find repose, and you will not reap until after you have sown at your own cost. A wide door is opened, but no one can enter except those who desire to feed the sheep and not to devour them, and who are determined to reply with kindness to the insults with which they are assailed. Labour and toil await you. ‡ I can promise you nothing but

\* 'Sine vanis controversiis vel aquæ vel panis aut censuum aut decimarum, in quibus pars Christianismus putat.'—Farellus Andronico. Choupard MSS.

† 'Non est quod otium expectes sed negotium.'—Farellus Andronico, Feb. 12, 1531.

‡ 'Labores plurimi.'—Ibid.

trouble. . . . If you will come with us, know that you are entering into a hard service. You will have to fight not against craven and disheartened adversaries, but against enemies brimful of decision and strength. Be therefore a brave and noble soldier; attack the enemy joyfully, and rush into the hottest of the fight, placing your confidence in God, to whom alone belong the battle and the victory. It is not we who fight, but the Lord.\*

But Farel called to the battle in vain: the timid recruits would not join the army. He received some little help indeed, but what was that for so great a work? Then his appeals grew louder. In the presence of the gigantic Alps, this humble man rose like them: his language swelled and resembled rather the cry of a soldier struggling in the midst of the enemy's ranks, than the sweet and subtle voice of the Gospel of peace. 'We are in the thick of the fight,' he said; 'the conflict is terrible; we are fighting man to man . . . but the Lord giveth the victory to his own.† Take up the sword, set the helmet on your head, buckle on the breastplate, hang the shield to your arm, gird your loins; and being thus armed with the panoply of God, rush into the midst of the battle, hurl the darts, throw down the enemy on every side, and put all the army to flight.‡ . . . But alas! instead

\* 'Sed in ipso pugnae aestu, robustos ac plenis viribus hostes alacer aggreddiaris, collocata in Deum fiducia, cujus est victoria sicut et pugna; non enim nos pugnamus, sed Dominus.'—Farellus Andronico. Jan. 27, 1531. Choupard MSS.

† 'Pugnam fervere, cum hostibus consertas manus jungere, victoriam suis impartire, sed non citra sudorem.'—Farellus Andronico, April 1531. Choupard MSS.

‡ 'In medios hostes prosilire, jacula vibrare, hostes hinc inde prosternere ac dissipare.'—Ibid.

of joining the soldiers of Christ, instead of rushing into the Lord's battles, you fear the cross, and the dangers that lie in wait for you. Preferring your own ease, you refuse to come to the assistance of your brethren. . . . Is that the behaviour of a christian? . . . The Holy Scriptures declare that the Lord will exact a severe reckoning for such cowardice. . . . Beware lest you bury the talent you have received. . . . Call to mind that you must give an account of all those souls, whom tyranny holds captive in its gloomy dungeons. You can set the light before their eyes, you can deliver them from their chains, you must conjure them to throw themselves into the arms of Jesus Christ. . . . Do not hesitate. . . . Christ must be preferred to everything. Do not trouble yourself about what your wife wishes and requires, but about what God asks and commands.\* More powerful solicitations had never been made; there was a new Paul in the world at this time. At last Farel's earnestness prevailed. Andronicus and others hastened to him, and laboured with him in the country that stretches from Basle and Berne as far as Geneva.

Delighted at receiving such helpers, the reformer hastened to fresh combats. Every parish, village, and town was to be won to Christ by an obstinate struggle. There is no soldier that has fought more battles. We can only find a parallel to Farel in the convert of Damascus. He took with him De Glautinis, minister of Tavannes, in the Bernese Jura, who had come to his help, and quitted Orbe, leaving on his left the picturesque gorge of the Jura, where the village of

\* 'Nec tantopere curandum quid uxor velit et poscat, sed que Deus ipse petat et jubeat.'—Farellus Andronico, April, 1531. Choupard MSS.



St. Croix lies hid, and over which soar the lofty tops of the Chasseron, and turned his steps towards Grandson. Ere long he came in sight of the celebrated walls of the old castle which stood near the extremity of the lake of Neuchâtel. This place, which was about to become an evangelical battle-field, had witnessed a far different struggle. Here, in 1476, the Swiss had rushed from the heights of Champagne and Bonvillars, while the terrible roaring of the bull of Uri portended death, and the cow of Unterwald uttered its warning sound.\* Here they bent the knee in presence of the hostile columns, and rising with shouts of '*Grandson!*' playing their fearful music, unfurling their ancient banners, and guarding them with their long and formidable spears, they charged the Burgundians with the rush of the tempest. Vainly did the commander of the cavalry, Sire Louis of Château-Guyon, brother of the Prince of Orange and of the Lord of Orbe and Grandson,—vainly did he spur his large war-horse and charge impetuously at the head of six thousand horsemen; vainly did he seize the banner of Schwytz, In der Gruob of Berne had given him a death-blow, and the Burgundians, as they saw the gigantic warrior fall, were struck with terror. Grandson as well as Orbe were lost to the family of that hero, and the sovereignty of the two towns passed to the cantons of Berne and Friburg. A panic spread through the ranks, and Charles the Bold was forced to fly, leaving behind him four hundred silk tents embroidered with gold and pearls, six hundred standards, and an immense quantity of plate, money, jewels, and precious stones. This vigorous attack and glorious

\* Warlike musical instruments.

victory, the fame of which still remained in that peaceful country, was a type of the work that Farel was to accomplish. By his means, Berne was about to strike at Grandson as well as Orbe a more formidable enemy than the Lord of Château-Guyon.\*

On the shore of the lake at the entrance of the town stood the vast convent of the Gray Friars. Farel and his friend De Glautinis, who accompanied him, stopped before its walls and said to each other that to this place doubtless the Lord had first directed their steps. They rang, entered the parlour, and the superior of the monastery, Friar Guy Regis, having asked them what they wanted, they begged him very coolly 'in the name of the Lords of Berne,' to grant them the use of the church. But Guy Regis, a resolute man and earnest priest, who knew all that had happened at Orbe, was offended at such insolence. 'Heretic!' said he to Farel. 'Son of a Jew!' exclaimed another monk. The reception was not encouraging. The two ministers discussed with some friends of the Word of God, what was to be done. 'Go to the priory on the hill,' said the latter. 'As you bear a letter from Messieurs of Berne for the prior, the monks will not dare refuse you.'

Accordingly Farel, De Glautinis, and a few of the brethren, proceeded to the Benedictine convent. They knocked and the door was opened; several monks appeared. As they knew already something about the arrival of the missionaries, they looked at them from head to foot, and Farel had scarcely asked permission to preach, when a loud uproar arose in the

\* Chronique de Neuchâtel. Chant de bataille, par un Lucernois. Müller, *Hist. de la Conféd. Suisse*.

cloister. The sacristan hid a pistol under his frock, another friar armed himself with a knife, and both came forward stealthily to lay hands upon the *heretic* who (according to them) was disturbing all the churches. The sacristan arrived first; pointing the pistol at Farel with one hand, he seized him with the other, and pulling him along, endeavoured to drag him into the convent, where a prison awaited him. De Glautinis observing this, sprang forward to rescue his friend, but the other monk, arriving at the scene of combat, fell upon him, flourishing his knife. Alarmed by the noise within the cloister, the friends of the evangelists, who had remained at the door, waiting to know whether they could hear Farel or not, rushed in and tore both him and his comrade from the stout arms of the monks. The gates of the monastery were closed immediately, and they remained so for a whole fortnight, so great was the terror inspired by the reformers.

Farel seeing there was nothing to be done at Grandson just then, departed for Morat, beseeching De Glautinis, whom he left behind him, to take advantage of every opportunity to proclaim the gospel. The monks entrenched within their walls, trembled, deliberated, kept watch, and armed themselves against this one man, as if they had an army before them. Convent gates and church doors were all close shut. De Glautinis, finding that he could not preach in the churches, determined to preach in the streets and in private houses; but he had hardly begun when the monks, informed by the signals of their agents whom they had instructed not to lose sight of the evangelist, made a vigorous sally. Guy Regis, the valiant

superior of the Gray Friars, the precentor, and all the monks came to the place where De Glautinis was preaching, and boldly placed themselves between him and his hearers: 'Come,' said the superior, 'come, if you dare, before the king or the emperor. Come to Besançon, to Dôle, or to Paris; I will show you and all the world that your preaching is mere witchcraft. Begone, we have had enough of you. You shall not enter the churches.' As soon as this harangue was over, the monks capped it by roaring out: 'Heretic, son of a Jew, apostate!' The troop having thus fired their volley, hastily retreated within their walls.\*

Some Bernese deputies, who chanced to be at Neuchâtel, hearing what was going on at Grandson, went thither without delay. They did not wish to force the people to be converted, but they desired that all under their rule should hear the gospel without hindrance, and thus have liberty to decide with full knowledge for Rome or for the Reformation. When the Bernese lords arrived at Grandson, which is not far from Neuchâtel, they ordered the conventual churches to be thrown open to the reformers. A messenger was sent to Farel, who returned immediately, bringing Viret with him, and from the 12th May the three evangelists began to preach Sundays and week-days. The monks, surprised, irritated, and yet restrained by fear of their dread lords, looked with gloomy eyes on the crowd that came to hear the *heresy*. The superior of the Gray Friars, who had a great reputation for learning, thought himself called upon to resist the reformers. They had hardly left

\* *Chroniqueur*, p. 112.



the pulpit when he entered it, and thus Farel and Guy Regis attacked and refuted each other, struggling, so to say, hand to hand. The evangelist preached grace, the monk prescribed works; the former reproached his opponent with disobeying Scripture, the latter reproached the other with disobeying the Church. The monks went further still: they conjured the magistrates to come to the defence of the faith, and the latter outlawed the ministers, while the sergeants arrested them. The populace, seeing them in the hands of the officers, followed them and covered them with abuse, and they were shut up in prison.\*

Thus the struggle descended to the people and grew all the warmer. Parties were formed, bands were organised. The catholics, in order to distinguish themselves, stuck fir-cones in their caps, and thus adorned stalked proudly through the streets. Their adversaries said to them as they passed: 'You insult Messieurs of Berne;' to which they arrogantly answered: 'You shall not prevent us.'

The inhabitants of Yverdun, a neighbouring town, which eagerly espoused the cause defended by Guy Regis, organised, not a troop of soldiers, but a procession. It quitted the town and passed along the shore of the lake; clerical banners instead of military colours waved above their heads, sacred chants instead of drums and trumpets filled the air. At last this curious reinforcement reached the city where such a fierce struggle was going on. The catholics no longer doubted of victory. Men's minds grew heated and

\* 'Duræchet, gebalgets, verschmæht.... Gott gelæstert.'—Berne to the bailli of Grandson, June 7.

their passions were inflamed. Farel and his friends, having been set at liberty, a black friar named Claude de Boneto stuck to the reformer and loaded him with abuse. The latter undismayed said: 'Christians, withdraw from the pope who has laid insupportable burdens on your back, which he will not touch with the tip of his finger. Come to Him who has taken all your burden and placed it on his own shoulders. Do not trust in the priests or in Rome. Have confidence in Jesus Christ.'\* The council of Berne took up the defence of the evangelist, and condemned friar Boneto.†

As the support of Yverdun had produced no effect, help was sent from Lausanne. On St. John's day (24th June) a cordelier arrived at Grandson to preach in honour of the saint. The church of the Franciscans was soon crowded, and Farel and De Glautinis were in the midst of the throng. The strange things which the preacher said filled them with sorrow; presently the reformer stood up, and (as was the custom of the times) began to refute the monk. The latter stopped, and the eyes of the assembly were turned upon the minister with signs of anger. The bailiff, John Reyff of Friburg, a good catholic, unable to restrain himself, raised his hand and struck Farel. This was the signal for a battle. Judges, gray friars, and burghesses of Grandson, who had come armed to the church, fell upon the two ministers, threw them to the ground, and showered blows and kicks upon them. Their friends hastened to their help, flung themselves

\* *Sommaire*, etc. p. 181.

† The Choupard MS. gives the sentence of Berne under the date of 17th June 1531.

into the midst of the fray, and succeeded in rescuing the reformers from the hands of the riotous crowd, but not before they had been ‘grievously maltreated in the face and other parts.’ The grand banneret of Orbe saw it, and it is he who tells the story.\*

The evangelicals lost no time: one of them started off at once to see the *Sieur de Watteville*, the avoyer of Berne, who chanced to be at his estate of Colombier, three leagues from Grandson. That magistrate went to the town, and wishing to put the inhabitants in a position to exercise the right of free enquiry, according to the principles of Berne, he ordered the cordelier and Farel to preach by turns, and then went to the church, attended by his servant, with the view of hearing both preachers. But there was something else to be done first. The people were still agitated with the emotions of the preceding day, and pretended that the reformers wanted to pull down the great crucifix, which was much respected by all the city. Two monks, Tissot and Gondoze, were distinguished by their zeal for the doctrines of the pope; sincere but fanatical, they would have thought they were doing God a service by murdering Farel. They had been posted as sentinels to defend the image supposed to be threatened. Armed with axes hidden under their frocks, they paced backwards and forwards, silent and watchful, at the foot of the stairs which led to the gallery where the famous crucifix stood. When the Lord of Berne appeared, one of the sentinels, seeing a strange face, which had an heretical look about it, stopped him abruptly. ‘Stand back, you cannot pass

\* *Mém. du Sire de Pierrefleur*, p. 167.

this way,' he said, while his comrade rudely pushed the *Sieur de Watteville*. 'Gently,' said the *avoyer* in a grave tone; 'you should not get in such a heat.' The patrician's serving-man, exasperated at this want of respect to his master, and less calm than he was, caught the cowed sentinel round the body, and feeling the axe under his frock, took it away and was about to strike him with it, when the Bernese lord checked him. All the monks fled in alarm, and *De Watteville* remaining master of the ground, placed his servant there on guard. The latter, stalking up and down with the axe on his shoulder, kept watch instead of the monks.

He had been there only a few minutes, when about thirty women, with flashing eyes and sullen air, each holding her serge apron gathered up in front, made their appearance and endeavoured to get into the gallery. Some had filled their aprons with mould from their gardens, and others with ashes from their kitchens, and with these weapons they were marching to battle. Their plan was not, indeed, to engage in a regular fight, but to lie in ambush in the gallery near the pulpit; and then as soon as *Farel* appeared, to throw the ashes into his eyes and the earth into his mouth, and so silence the fearless preacher of the Gospel. This was their notion of controversy. The troop approached: the *avoyer's* serving-man, firm as became a servant of my lord of Berne, was still pacing to and fro, axe in hand. He perceived the feminine battalion, immediately saw what was their intention, and advanced brandishing the weapon he had taken from the monks. The devotees of *Grandson*, seeing a Bernese instead of a gray friar, were alarmed; they



shrieked, let go their aprons, suffered the mould and ashes to fall upon the floor of the church, and ran off to their homes.

The conspiracies of the monks and of the women being thus baffled, the Bernese magistrate did not take advantage of it to make Farel preach alone. He wished the balance to be even. The gray friar therefore and the reformer quietly took their turns. Tissot and Gondozi, who had stopped De Watteville, were imprisoned for a fortnight. The two monks, recovering from their passion, began to consider what this *Lutheran doctrine* could be which possessed such staunch adherents. The reformers visited them, and showed them much affection. The monks were touched, they saw that the heresy of which they had been so afraid was simply the all-merciful Gospel of Jesus Christ. They left the prison with new thoughts, and two years later, says the banneret, 'they received the Lutheran law, were made preachers, one at Fontaines, the other at Chavornay, married, and had a large family of children.' In the days of the Reformation, as in those of the apostles, it was often seen that those who 'kicked against the pricks' obtained mercy and became heralds of the faith.\*

A last tumult was to cause the principles of religious liberty to be proclaimed in Switzerland. It occurred at Orbe during the Christmas holidays. The catholics, proud of the midnight devotions customary among them at that season of the year, insulted the reformed: 'Go to bed,' they said; 'while we are singing the praises of God in the church you will be

\* Choupard MSS. Stettler MSS. *Mém. du Sire de Pierrefleur.*

sleeping in your beds like swine.' . . . . The reformers, who did not like midnight masses with all their profanations, desired to take advantage of the evening hours, when the cessation of labour gave an opportunity of collecting a large congregation. At seven o'clock on Christmas eve they asked the governor for the keys of the church: 'It is not sermon time,' he answered, 'and you shall not have them.' They rejoined that every hour, except at night, was sermon time; and being determined to begin the evening services, they went to the church, opened the doors, the preacher got up into the pulpit, and in a moment the place was crowded. A few priests or bigots, peeping into the building, exclaimed in surprise at the crowd: 'The devil must have sent a good many there!' The minister (it may have been Viret) explained the great mystery of faith, the coming of the Saviour, and asked his hearers if they would not receive him into their hearts. The sermon had lasted some time, and the clock struck nine. Immediately the bells rang, and the catholics crowded into the church, although there was no service at that hour.

The reformed, being unwilling to quarrel, retired home quietly; but a mischievous fellow, who had crept into the assembly with the intention of exciting the people, began to whisper to his neighbours that the heretics were going to destroy everything at St. Claire. This was false, but they believed it; the crowd deserted the altars, and, meeting with a few reformers in the streets, knocked some down, and broke the heads of others; the best known among them had already reached home, but the catholic population assembled in front of their houses, and threw stones at their

windows. Viret departed for Berne with ten of the reformed, in order to make his complaint.\*

A few days later, on the 9th January 1532, two hundred and thirty ministers assembled at Berne, among whom was the wise Capito, and formed a sort of council. Having most of them left the Romish church, they desired liberty not only for themselves, but also for their adversaries. The laymen were of the same opinion. Berne, the representative of protestantism, agreed with Friburg, the champion of popery, on this subject. 'We desire,' said the Bernese, 'that every one should have free choice to go to the preaching or to mass.' 'And we also,' said the Friburgers. 'We desire that all should live in peace together, and that neither priests nor preachers should call their adversaries heretics or murderers.' 'And we also,' said the Friburgers. 'Nevertheless, we do not wish to hinder the priests and preachers from conferring amicably and fraternally concerning the faith.' 'Quite right,' said the Friburgers. These articles, and others like them—the first monument of religious liberty in Switzerland—were published on the 30th January 1532.† It is to be regretted that this proclamation of the sixteenth century was not henceforward taken as a pattern in all christian countries, and in Switzerland, where it was drawn up. The order did not for long prevent violent collisions.

We shall now leave this quarter, and follow elsewhere the great champion of the Word of God, Farel; but we shall return here later. The evangelical seed

\* *Mém. du Sire de Pierrefleur*, p. 74. Ruchat, iii. p. 45.

† *Mém. du Sire de Pierrefleur*, pp. 82–85. Choupard MSS. Ruchat, iii. p. 47.

was to be sown still more abundantly in the Pays de Vaud, and that soil, which appeared adverse at first, will produce and has produced, in our days especially, the finest of fruits.



## CHAPTER V.

## THE WALDENSES APPEAR.

(1526 TO OCTOBER 1532.)

ON Friday, 12th July, Farel came from Morat to Grandson, where a quiet conference was to be held. Four disciples of the Gospel begged to receive the imposition of hands. Farel and his colleagues examined them, and, finding them fitted for the evangelical work, sent them to announce the Gospel in the neighbouring villages of Gy, Fy, Montagny, Noville, Bonvillars, St. Maurice, Champagne, and Concise. But the conference was to be occupied with more important business.

For two or three years past a strange report had circulated among the infant churches that were forming between the Alps and the Jura. They heard talk of christians who belonged to the Reformation without having ever been reformed. It was said that in some of the remote valleys of the Alps of Piedmont and Dauphiny, and in certain parts of Calabria, Apulia, Provence, Lorraine, and other countries,\* there were believers who for many centuries had resisted the pope and recognised no other authority than Holy Scripture. Some called them 'Waldenses,' others 'poor

\* Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 2.

men of Lyons,' and others 'Lutherans.' The report of the victories of the Reformation having penetrated their valleys, these pious men had listened to them attentively; one of them in particular, Martin Gonin, pastor of Angrogne, was seriously moved by them. Being a man of decided and enterprising character, and ready to give his life for the Gospel, the pious *barbe* (the name given by the Waldenses to their pastors) had felt a lively desire to go and see closely what the Reformation was. This thought haunted him everywhere: whether he traversed the little glens which divided his valley, like a tree with its branches,\* or whether he followed the course of the torrent, or sat at the foot of the Alps of Cella, Vachera, and Infernet, Gonin sighed after Wittenberg and Luther. At last he made up his mind; he departed in 1526, found his way to the reformers, and brought back into his valleys much good news and many pious books. From that time the Reformation was the chief topic of conversation among the *barbes* and shepherds of those mountains.

In 1530 many of them, threading the defiles of the Alps, arrived on the French slopes, and following the picturesque banks of the Durance, took their way towards Merindol, where a synod of Waldensian christians had been convened. They walked on, animated with the liveliest joy; they had thought themselves alone, and in one day there had been born to them in Europe thousands of brethren who listened humbly to the Word of God, and made the pope tremble on his throne.

\* Leger, *Hist. des Eglises Vaudoises*, p. 3.

. . . . They spoke of the Reformation, of Luther, and Melancthon, and of the Swiss as they descended the rough mountain paths. When the synod was formed, they resolved to send a deputation to the evangelicals of Switzerland, to show them that the Waldensian doctrines were similar to those of the reformers, and to prevail upon the latter to give them the hand of fellowship. In consequence, two of them, George Morel and Peter Masson, set out for Basle.

On their arrival in that city, they asked for the house of Æcolampadius; they entered his study, and the old times, represented by these simple-minded worthy barbes, greeted the new times in the person of the amiable and steadfast reformer. The latter could not see these brave and rustic men standing before him and not feel an emotion of respect and sympathy. The Waldenses took from their bosoms the documents of their faith, and presented them to the pious doctor. ‘Turning away from Antichrist,’ said these papers, and Masson and Morel repeated the words, ‘we turn towards Christ. He is our life, our truth, our peace, our righteousness, our shepherd, our advocate, our victim, our high-priest, who died for the salvation of believers.\* But alas! as smoke goeth before the fire, the temptation of Antichrist precedeth the glory.† In the time of the apostles Antichrist was but a child; he has now grown into a perfect man. He robs Christ of the merit of salvation, and ascribes it to his own works. He strips the Holy Ghost of the power of regeneration, and attributes it to his ceremonies. He

\* ‘Que Christ es la nostra vita, e verita, e pæçs, e justitia, e pastor.’  
*Confession de Foi des Vaudois.*

† ‘Enayma lo fum vai derant lo fuoc.’—*L’Antichrist.*

leads the people to mass, a sad tissue of jewish, pagan, and christian rites, and deprives them of the spiritual and sacramental manducation.\* He hates, persecutes, accuses, robs, and kills the members of Jesus Christ.† He boasts of his length of life, of his monks, his virgins, his miracles, his fasts, and his vigils, and uses them as a cloak to hide his wickedness. Nevertheless, the rebel is growing old and decreasing, and the Lord is killing the felon by the breath of his mouth.‡ Ecolampadius admired the simplicity of their creed. He would not have liked a doctrine without life, or an apparent life without doctrine, but he found both in the Waldensian barbes. ‘I thank God,’ he told them, ‘that he has called you to so great light.’§

Ere long the doctors and faithful ones of Basle desired to see these men of the ancient times. Seated round the domestic hearth, the Waldenses narrated the sufferings of their fathers, and described their flocks scattered over the two slopes of the Alps. ‘Some people,’ they said, ‘ascribe our origin to a wealthy citizen of Lyons, Peter de Vaux or Waldo, who, being at a banquet with his friends, saw one of them suddenly fall dead.|| Moved and troubled in his conscience he prayed to Jesus, sold his goods, and began to preach and sent others to preach the Gospel everywhere.¶ But,’ added the barbes, ‘we descend

\* ‘Priva lo poble de l’espirtual e sacramental manjament.’—*L’Anti-christ*.

† ‘El eyra, e persec, e acaissonna, roba e mortifica li membre de Christ.’—*Ibid*.

‡ ‘Lo Segnor Jesus occi aquest felon.’—*Ibid*.

§ Letter from Ecolampadius, 13 Oct. 1530.

|| Anno 1170.

¶ ‘Suis omnibus venditis, officium apostolarum usurpavit.’—Stephanus de Barbone, a dominican monk of Lyons, in 1225.



from more ancient times, from the time when Constantine introducing the world into the Church, our fathers set themselves apart, or even from the time of the apostles.\*

In the course of conversation, however, with these brethren, the christians of Basle noticed certain points of doctrine which did not seem conformable with evangelical truth, and a certain uneasiness succeeded to their former joy. Wishing to be enlightened, Ecolampadius addressed a few questions to the two barbes. ‘All our ministers,’ they answered on the first point, ‘live in celibacy, and work at some honest trade.’ ‘Marriage, however,’ said Ecolampadius, ‘is a state very becoming to all true believers, and particularly to those who ought to be in all things *examples to the flock*. We also think,’ he continued, ‘that pastors ought not to devote to manual labour, as yours do, the time they could better employ in the study of scripture. The minister has many things to learn ; God does not teach us miraculously and without labour ; we must take pains in order to know.’†

The barbes were at first a little confused at seeing that the elders had to learn of their juniors ; however, they were humble and sincere men, and the Basle doctor having questioned them on the sacraments, they confessed that through weakness and fear they had their children baptised by Romish priests, and that they even communicated with them and sometimes attended mass. This unexpected avowal startled the meek Ecolampadius. ‘What,’ said he, ‘has not

\* ‘Aliqui enim dicunt quod duraverit a tempore Sylvestri, aliqui a tempore apostolorum.’—Reinerius, 1250, *contra Waldenses*, ch. iv.

† Scultet, ii. p. 294. Ruchat, ii. p. 320.

Christ, the holy victim, fully satisfied the everlasting justice for us? Is there any need to offer other sacrifices after that of Golgotha? By saying *Amen* to the priests' mass you deny the grace of Jesus Christ.'

Æcolampadius next spoke of the strength of man after the fall. 'We believe,' said the barbes modestly, 'that all men have some natural virtue, just as herbs, plants, and stones have.'\* 'We believe,' said the reformer, 'that those who obey the commandments of God do so, not because they have more strength than others, but because of the great power of the Spirit of God which renews their will.'† 'Ah,' said the barbes, who did not feel themselves in harmony with the reformers on this point, 'nothing troubles us weak people so much as what we have heard of Luther's teaching relative to free-will and predestination. . . . Our ignorance is the cause of our doubts: pray instruct us.'

The charitable Æcolampadius did not think the differences were such as ought to alienate him from the barbes. 'We must enlighten these christians,' he said, 'but above all things we must love them.' Had they not the same Bible and the same Saviour as the children of the Reformation? Had they not preserved the essential truths of the faith from the primitive times? Æcolampadius and his friends agitated by this reflection, gave their hands to the Waldensian deputation: 'Christ,' said the pious doctor, 'is in you as he is in us, and we love you as brethren.'

\* Latin paper of the barbes, 15th question. Ruchat, ii. p. 324.

† 'Nisi per spiritum sanctum reparemur, nihil vel velimus vel agamus boni.'—*Æcolampadii Confessio*, art. 1.

The two barbes left Basle and proceeded to Strasburg to confer with Bucer and Capito, after which they prepared to return to their valleys. As Peter Masson was of Burgundian origin, they determined to pass through Dijon, a journey not unattended with danger. It was said here and there in cloisters and in bishops' palaces that the old heretics had come to an understanding with the new. The pious conversation of the two Waldensians having attracted the attention of certain inhabitants of Dijon, a clerical and fanatical city, they were thrown into prison. What shall they do? What, they ask, will become of the letters and instructions they are bearing to their co-religionists? One of them, Morel, the bearer of this precious trust, succeeded in escaping: Masson, who was left, paid for both; he was condemned, executed, and died with the peace of a believer.

When they saw only one of their deputation appear, the Waldenses comprehended the dangers to which the brethren had been exposed, and wept for Masson. But the news of the reformers' welcome spread great joy among them, in Provence, Dauphiny, in the valleys of the Alps, and even to Apulia and Calabria. The observations, however, of *Æcolampadius*, and his demand for a stricter reform, were supported by some and rejected by others. The Waldensians determined therefore to take another step: 'Let us convoke a synod of all our churches,' said they, 'and invite the reformers to it.'

One July day in 1532, when Farel was at Grandson, as we have seen, in conference with other ministers, he was told that two individuals, whose foreign look indicated that they came from a distance, desired to

speak with him. Two barbes, one from Calabria, named George, the other Martin Gonin, a Piedmontese, entered the room. After saluting the evangelicals in the name of their brethren, they told them that the demand that had been addressed to them to separate entirely from Rome had caused division among them. 'Come,' they said to the ministers assembled at Grandson, 'come to the synod and explain your views on this important point. After that we must come to an understanding about the means of propagating over the world the doctrine of the Gospel which is common to both of us.' No message could be more agreeable to Farel; and as these two points were continually occupying his thoughts, he determined to comply with the request of the Waldensian brethren. His fellow-countryman, the pious Saunier, wished to share his dangers.

The members of the conference and the evangelicals of Grandson gazed with respect upon these ancient witnesses of the truth, arriving among them from the farther slopes of the Alps and the extremity of Italy, where they would have had no idea of going to look for brethren. They crowded round them and gave them a welcome, overflowing with love for them as they thought of the long fidelity and cruel sufferings of their ancestors. They listened with interest to the story of the persecutions endured by their fathers, and the heroism with which the Waldenses had endured them. They were all ears when they were told how the barbes and their flocks were suddenly attacked by armed bands in their snowy mountains during the festival of Christmas in the year 1400; how men, women, and children had been compelled to flee over



the rugged rocks, and how many of them had perished of cold and hunger, or had fallen by the sword. In one place the bodies of fourscore little children were found frozen to death in the stiffened arms of their mothers who had died with them. . . . In another place thousands of fugitives who had taken refuge in deep caverns (1488) had been suffocated by the fires which their cruel persecutors had kindled at the entrance of their hiding-place.\* Would not the Reformation regard these martyrs as its precursors? Was it not a privilege for it thus to unite with the witnesses who had given glory to Jesus Christ since the first ages of the Church?

Some of the Swiss christians were alarmed at the idea of Farel's journey. In truth great dangers threatened the reformer. The martyrdom of Peter Masson, sacrificed two years before, had exasperated the Waldenses of Provence, and their lamentations had aroused the anger of their enemies. The bishops of Sisteron, Apt, and Cavaillon had taken counsel together and laid a remonstrance before the parliament of Aix, which had immediately ordered a raid to be made on the heretics: the prisons were filled with Waldensians and Lutherans, real or pretended. Martin Gonin, one of the two Waldensian deputies, was in a subsequent journey arrested at Grenoble, put into a sack, and drowned in the Isère. A similar fate might easily happen to Farel. Did not the country he would have to cross depend on the duke of Savoy, and had not Bellegarde and Challans laid hands on Bonivard in a country less favourable to ambuscades than that which

\* See the histories of Léger, Perrin, Muston, Monastier, &c.

Farel had to pass through? That mattered not: he did not hesitate. He will leave these quarters where the might of Berne protects him and pass through the midst of his enemies. 'There was in him the same zeal as in his Master,' says an historian;\* 'like the Saviour, he feared neither the hatred of the Pharisees, nor the cunning of Herod, nor the rage of the people.' He made every preparation for his departure, and Saunier did the same.†

Just as Farel was about to leave Switzerland, he received unpleasant tidings from France, and thus found himself solicited on both sides. He wrote to his fellow-countrymen one of those letters, so full of consolation and wisdom, which characterise our reformers. 'Men look fiercely at you,' he said, 'and threaten you, and lay heavy fines upon you; your friends turn their robes and become your enemies. . . . All men distress you. . . . Observing all modesty, meekness, and friendship, persevering in holy prayers, living purely, and helping the poor, commit everything to the Father of mercies, by whose aid you will walk, strong and unwearied, in all truth.'‡

Towards the end of August, Farel and Saunier took leave of the brethren around them, got on their horses, and departed. Their course was enveloped in mystery: they avoided the places where they might be known and traversed uninhabited districts. Having crossed the Alps and passed through Pignerol, they fixed their eyes, beaming with mournful interest, on the lonely

\* Ancillon.

† Choupard MSS. Léger, 2me partie, p. 7, etc. Monastier, i. pp. 167, 201. Kirchhofer, *Farel's Leben*, p. 153.

‡ Letter of 26 July 1532. Choupard MSS.

places where almost inaccessible caverns, pierced in the rugged sides of the mountains, often formed the only temple of the Christians, and where every rock had a history of persecution and martyrdom. Their place of meeting was Angrogne, in the parish of the pious Martin Gonin. The two reformers quitted La Tour, and following the sinuosities of the torrent, and turning the precipices, they arrived at the foot of a magnificent forest, and then reached a vast plateau abounding in pastures: this was the Val d'Angrogne. They gazed upon the steep ranges of the Soiran and Infernet, the pyramidal flanks of mount Vandalin, and the gentler slopes upon which stood the lowly hamlets of the valley. They found Waldenses here and there in the meadows and at the foot of the rocks; some were prepared 'to be a guard for the ministers of the good law;' and all looked with astonishment and joy at the pastors who came from Switzerland. 'That one with the red beard and riding the white horse is Farel,' said John Peyret of Angrogne, one of their escort, to his companions; 'the other on the dark horse is Saunier.' 'There was also a third,' add the eye-witnesses, 'a tall man and rather lame:' he may have been a Waldensian who had acted as a guide to the two deputies.\* Other foreign Christians met in this remote valley

\* Gilles, p. 40. Monastier, i. p. 201. We learn from the *Apologie du translateur* at the beginning of Olivetan's Bible (1535) that Olivetan did not go into the valleys as some have believed; he speaks of two deputies only under the pseudonyms of *Hilmerne Cusemeth* (Guillaume Farel) and *Antoine Almeutes* (ἀλμευτής, salter, Saunier). As for the third, whom he calls *Cephas Chlorotes*, if he addressed the *Apologie* to him also, it was not because he had been to Angrogne, but because he had joined the other two in asking him to undertake that edition of the Bible. This Cephas Chlorotes is evidently Peter Viret (χλωρος, virens).

of the Alps. There were some from the southern extremity of Italy, from Burgundy, Lorraine, Bohemia, and countries nearer home. There was also a certain number of persons of more distinguished appearance: the lords of Rive Noble, Mirandola, and Solaro had quitted their castles to take part in this Alpine council. Clergy, senate, and people were thus assembled; and as no room could have held the number, it was resolved to meet in the open air. Gonin selected for this purpose the hamlet of Chanforans, where there is now only one solitary house. There, in a shady spot, on the side of the mountain, surrounded by an amphitheatre of rugged cliffs and distant peaks, the barbe had arranged the rude benches on which the members of this Christian assembly were to sit.

Two parties met there face to face. At the head of that which was unwilling to break entirely with the Roman Catholic Church were two barbes, Daniel of Valence and John of Molines, who struggled for the success of their system of accommodation and compliance. On the other hand Farel and Saunier supported the evangelical party, who had not such distinguished representatives as the traditional party, and proposed the definitive rejection of all semi-catholic doctrines and usages. Before the opening of the synod the two ministers, finding themselves surrounded by numbers of the brethren, both in their homes and under the shade of the trees where the assembly was to be held, had already explained to them the faith of the Reformation, and several of the Waldenses had exclaimed that it was the doctrine taught from father to son among them, and to which they were resolved to adhere. Yet the issue of the combat appeared doubtful; for the semi-catholic



party was strong, and described the reformers as foreigners and innovators who had come there to alter their ancient doctrines. But Farel had good hopes, for he could appeal to Holy Scripture and even to the confessions of the Waldenses themselves.

On the 12th September the synod was opened 'in the name of God.' One party looked with favour on Farel and Saunier, the other on John of Molines and Daniel of Valence ; but the majority appeared to be on the side of the Reformation. Farel rose and boldly broached the question : he contended that there was no longer any ceremonial law, that no act of worship had any merit of itself, and that a multitude of feasts, dedications, rites, chants, and mechanical prayers was a great evil. He reminded them that Christian worship consists essentially in faith in the Gospel, in charity, and in the confession of Christ. '*God is a spirit,*' he said, 'and divine worship should be performed *in spirit and in truth.*' The two barbes strove in vain to oppose these views, the meeting testified their assent to them. Did not their confession reject 'all feasts, vigils of saints, water called holy, the act of abstaining from flesh, and other like things invented by men?''\* The worship in spirit was proclaimed.

Farel, delighted at this first victory, desired to win another and perhaps more difficult one. He believed that it was by means of the doctrine of the natural power of man that popery took salvation out of the hands of God and put it into the hands of the priests : 'God,' said he, 'has elected before the foundation of

\* 'Las festas et las vigalias de li sanct, e l'aiga laqual dison benieta, &c.'

the world all those who have been or who will be saved. It is impossible for those who have been ordained to salvation not to be saved. Whosoever upholds free-will, absolutely denies the grace of God.' This was a point which Molines and his friend resisted with all their might. But did not the Waldensian confessions recognise the impotency of man and the all-sufficiency of grace? Did not they call the denial of these things 'the work of Antichrist?''\* Farel moreover adduced proof from Scripture. The synod was at first in suspense, but finally decided that it recognised this article as 'conformable with Holy Scripture.'†

Certain questions of morality anxiously occupied the reformer. In his opinion the Romish Church had turned everything topsy-turvy, calling those works *good* which she prescribed though they had nothing good in them, and those *bad* which were in conformity with the will of God. 'There is no good work but that which God has commanded,' said Farel, 'and none bad but what He has forbidden.' The assembly expressed their entire assent.

Then continuing the struggle, the firm evangelical doctor successively maintained that the true confession of a Christian is to confess to God alone ; that marriage is forbidden to no man, whatever his condition ; that Scripture determines only two sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper ; that Christians may swear in God's name and fill the office of magistrate ; and finally, that they should lay aside their manual

\* Léger, *Confession de Foi des Vaudois*, p. 23, verso ; *Traité de l'Antichrist*, p. 75.

† Léger, *Briève Confession de Foi* (1532), p. 95.

occupations on Sunday in order to have leisure to praise God, exercise charity, and listen to the truths of Scripture.\* ‘Yes, that is it,’ said the delighted Waldenses, ‘that is the doctrine of our fathers.’ †

Molines and Daniel of Valence did not, however, consider their cause lost. Ought not the fear of persecution to induce the Waldenses to persevere in certain dissimulations calculated to secure them from the inquisitive eyes of the enemies of the faith? Nothing displeased the reformers so much as dissembling. ‘Let us put off that paint,’ said Calvin, ‘by which the Gospel is disfigured, and let us not endeavour slavishly to please our adversaries; let us go boldly to work. If we permit compromises in some practices the whole doctrine will fall, and the building be thrown down.’ ‡ Farel thought as Calvin did. Perceiving this loophole for the two barbes, he urged the necessity of a frank confession of the truth. The members of the assembly, pricked in their consciences by the remembrance of their former backslidings, bound themselves to take no part henceforward in any Romish superstition, and to recognise as their pastor no priest of the pope’s church. ‘We will perform our worship,’ they said, ‘openly and publicly to give glory to God.’ ‡

The two barbes, who were no doubt sincere, became more eloquent. The moment was come that was to decide the future. In their opinion, by establishing new principles they cast discredit on the men who had

\* Léger, *Briève Confession*, p. 95, verso.

† Ibid.

‡ Gilles, *History of the Churches of Piedmont*, p. 30.

hitherto directed the churches. No doubt it was culpable to take part in certain ceremonies with an unworthy object, but was it so when it was done for good ends? To break entirely with the Catholic Church would render the existence of the Waldenses impossible, or at least would provoke hostilities which would reduce them completely to silence. . . . Farel replied with wonderful energy maintaining the rights of truth. He showed them that every compromise with error is a lie. The purity of the doctrine he professed, his elevated thoughts, the ardent affection expressed by his voice, his gestures, and his looks, electrified the Waldenses, and poured into their souls the holy fire with which his own was burning. These witnesses of the middle ages called to mind how the children of Israel having adopted the customs of people alien to the covenant of God, wept abundantly and exclaimed : ‘ *We have trespassed against God!*’ \* The Waldenses felt like them, and desired to make amends for their sins. They drew up a brief confession in 17 articles, in conformity with the resolutions that had been adopted, and then said : ‘ We adhere with one accord to the present declaration, and we pray God that, of his great charity, nothing may divide us henceforward, and that, even when separated from one another, we may always remain united in the same spirit.’ Then they signed their names.†

The agreement was not however universal. During the six days’ discussion several barbes and laymen

\* Léger, *Hist. des Eglises Vaudoises*, p. 35. Ezra, x.; Nehemiah, ix. x.

† This *Briève Confession* is in the library of the University of Cambridge. Léger, p. 95; Muston, *Hist. des Vaudois*, &c.



might have been seen standing apart, in some shady place, with gloomy air and uneasy look, talking together on the resolutions proposed to the synod. At the moment when every one was affixing his signature to the confession, the two leaders withheld theirs, and withdrew from the assembly.

During the discussion, and even before it, Farel and Saunier had had several conversations and conferences with the Waldenses, in the course of which the barbes had displayed their old manuscripts, handed down from the twelfth century, as they said: the *Noble Lesson*, the *Ancient Catechism*, the *Antichrist*, the *Purgatory*, and others. These writings bore the date of A.D. 1120, which probably was not disputed by Farel. One line of the *Noble Lesson* seems to indicate this as the period when it was composed.\* Since then, however, more recent dates have been assigned to the other writings, especially to the *Antichrist*, and even to the *Noble Lesson*. In any case, however, these documents belong to a time anterior to the Reformation.† The Waldensians displayed with peculiar pride several manuscript copies of the Old and New Testament in the vulgar tongue. ‘These books,’ they said, ‘were copied correctly by hand so long ago as to be beyond memory, and are to be seen in many families.’ Farel and Saunier had received and handled these writings with emotion; they had turned over the leaves, and ‘marvelling at

\* Ben ha mil e cent anez compli entierament; line 6.

† See the researches into the Cambridge MSS. and the German works of Dieckhoff and Zezschwitz. The latter author is of opinion that the *Waldensian Catechism*, the *Antichrist*, and other writings, belong to the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth century. *Catechisms of the Waldenses and Bohemian Brethren* (in German), Erlangen, 1863.

the heavenly favour accorded to so small a people,' had rendered thanks to the Lord because the Bible had never been taken from them.

They did not stop there: Farel addressing the synod, represented to them that the copies being few in number they could only serve for a few persons: 'Ah!' said he, 'if there are so many sects and heresies, so much trouble and confusion now in the world, it all comes from ignorance of the Word of God. It would therefore be exceedingly necessary for the honour of God and the well-being of all christians who know the French language, and for the destruction of all doctrines repugnant to the truth, to translate the Bible from the Hebrew and Greek tongues into French.'\*

No proposal could be more welcome to the Waldenses; their existence was due to their love of Scripture, and all their treatises and poems celebrated it:

The Scriptures speak and we must believe.

Look at the Scriptures from beginning to end.†

Thus spoke the *Noble Lesson*. They agreed 'joyfully and with good heart to Farel's demand, busying and exerting themselves to carry out the undertaking.' The proposition was voted enthusiastically, and the delighted reformers looked with emotion and joy at this faithful and constant people, to whom God had entrusted for so many ages the ark of the new covenant, and who were now inspired with fresh zeal for his service.‡

\* Olivetan's Bible: *Apologie du traducteur*.

† "Ma l'Escriptura di, e nos creire o deven."—*Nobla Leycon*, l. 19.

"Regarde l'Escriptura del fin commencemente."—*Ib.* l. 23.

‡ Gilles, Léger, Muston, Monastier.

The hour had come for them to separate. John of Molines and Daniel of Valence went to Bohemia, and joined the Waldenses of that country; the pastors returned to their churches, the shepherds to their mountains, and the lords to their castles. Farel mounted his white horse, Saunier his black one; they shook hands with the Waldenses who surrounded them, and descending from Angrogne to La Tour, bade adieu to the valleys.

Where should they go? What would be the next work undertaken by Farel? . . . . Geneva had long occupied his thoughts, and as he crossed the Alps he had before him in spirit that city with its wants and its inhabitants, especially those who were beginning to 'meditate on Jesus Christ.'\* Already, before his departure for Italy, Farel had conceived the plan of stopping at Geneva on his return, and with that intent had even received from my lords of Berne some letters of introduction addressed to the leading Huguenots. 'I will go to them now,' he said, 'I will speak to them, even if there is nobody that will hear me.'†

This idea, which never quitted him, was the beginning of the Reformation of Geneva.

\* Vol. II. p. 583.

† Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 6. Choupard and Roset, MSS.

## CHAPTER VI.

PLANS OF THE EMPEROR, THE DUKE OF SAVOY, AND THE BISHOP  
AGAINST GENEVA.

(1530-1532.)

JUST when the Gospel was about to enter Geneva with Farel and Saunier, the bishop-prince was making new exertions to recover his power. A crisis was approaching : a decisive step must be taken. Which shall have supremacy in the church—the bulls of the pope or the Scriptures of God ? Which shall have supremacy in the state—slavery or liberty ? Great powers had determined to oppress this little city ; but humble servants of God were about to enter it one after another, and planting there the standard of Christ, secure the victory to independence and the Gospel.

The Duke of Savoy, desiring to inflict a fatal blow on Geneva, had invoked the co-operation of the most powerful monarchs of Europe, and despatched to Charles V., then at the diet of Augsburg, the usual minister of his tyranny, the man whom he had employed to put Levrier to death, and to capture Bonivard. As soon as Bellegarde reached Augsburg (11th September 1530) he waited on the Sire de Montfalconet, who at that time discharged the office of grand equerry to His Majesty, and who ‘had great credit with the emperor, so that nothing



was kept secret from him.\* Enemies whom the duke had at the imperial court had created a very unfavourable impression of this prince; Bellegarde accordingly gave a pension of 300 crowns to the equerry, who earnt them under the circumstances we are describing, by following the envoy's instructions. The latter, being impatient to draw the emperor into the plans concocted for seizing Geneva, begged Montfalconet to ask his master at what hour he would be pleased 'to permit him to pay his respects.' 'Tell him,' said Charles, who had on his hands all the affairs of protestantism and Germany, 'tell him that in consequence of my many engagements he must wait a couple of days.' Bellegarde did so, and on the third morning attended punctually in the emperor's chamber. Very impatient to see the puissant monarch, he was rehearsing what he had to tell him about Geneva, when instead of His Majesty he saw Montfalconet enter the room alone with this message: 'The emperor desires me to say that for the present you must only hand in his highness's letter, as well as that from his most dread lady; and he will give you an audience directly after.' The ambassador was much vexed at the delay; but to console him the equerry confidentially informed him of the great trouble the protestants of Germany were giving Charles. 'I assure you the emperor is in such a condition,' he said, 'that it is impossible for him to bring the affairs of the empire into

\* We have found among the archives at Turin (No. 49, bundle 12) the *Mémoire de M. de Bellegarde au sujet de l'audience qu'il a eue de S.M. Impériale touchant les différends que S. A. avait avec ceux de Genève*. This manuscript of about 25 pages has supplied us with the particulars in the text.

anything like a reasonable state. He has therefore forsaken the counsels of men to have recourse to the Lord only. As the *help* of the world fails me, said His Majesty this morning (14th September), I hope Divine Providence will come to my assistance. The emperor then confessed, and retired into the oratory of the palace to receive the sacrament. He has also ordered that prestations (confessions, communions, and prayers) should be made in every place where there are any devout people.'

While these two individuals were talking Charles came out of his oratory. M. de Bellegarde made him a low bow, humbly presented him the compliments of the duke and duchess, and handed him the letters. The emperor, who was busy, told him to return the next morning at his *levée*. Bellegarde did not fail, and Charles received him with much kindness. 'Give me news of his highness's health,' he said, 'and also of madam my good sister (Duchess Beatrice), and of my nephew monsieur their son.' Bellegarde answered his questions, and then made all the communications to the emperor with which the duke had charged him. He hoped the emperor would immediately enter into conversation with him about the plans formed against Geneva, but it was not so. 'I am very glad,' said Charles, 'that the duke has sent you to me; but, considering my great occupations, be so good as to draw up a memoir of what you think most expedient for the despatch of the business that brings you here, and then deliver it to my lord Grandvelle.'

Here was a fresh delay. The minister's answer, considering the numerous offices he filled, had to be waited for; yet Bellegarde spoke seven times with

Charles V., 'each time giving his majesty some little information about the duke's affairs.' But the emperor, while appearing to listen to the disputes between Geneva and Turin, frequently had his thoughts elsewhere. He was tormented with the state of the empire, and did not conceal it from his brother-in-law's envoy. 'I do not mean,' he said one day to Bellegarde, 'that the duke shall be either dismissed or ejected; but the diet (of Augsburg) is all in confusion and broken up. I have no great hopes. . . . It is a long while since I have found the princes of Germany thus dilly-dallying, putting me off from day to day, so that I am quite out of hope, and my head is confused. . . . Ah! if it pleased God that other princes were of my opinion . . . . Christendom would not be in such confusion.' These are the very words his majesty was pleased to use, adds Bellegarde in his memoir. He was surprised at them. That man who knew so well how to put one of his adversaries in prison and another to death, was astonished that so mighty a prince as Charles should not adopt an equally simple and expeditious method. He ventured to give the emperor a little advice. He had learnt that the strength of the protestants was in their union. 'Sire,' he said, 'break up the alliances, as well past as future, which have been formed to your great prejudice, and whose consequences are so dangerous.'—'At present,' said Charles, 'there is no time. I cannot now reduce the princes and cities of Germany that are opposed to the faith; but I am determined not to abandon the work, and when I have completed it, what concerns his highness (be sure you tell him) will not be forgotten.' This then was Charles's plan: first to crush the protestants of Germany, and then the

huguenots of Geneva. In his opinion these were as dangerous for the Latin races as the former for the Germans.

At last, on the 6th October, Grandvelle, chancellor of the empire (he was the father of the famous cardinal), accompanied by the commander——,\* had an interview with Bellegarde, and gave him the emperor's answer. 'With respect to Geneva, his majesty thinks that to avoid falling into the danger which the duke has at all times feared and avoided, no part or parcel of his states must become Swiss. You must take all the more precaution, because the nature of the cantons is always to extend and grow larger, and the rebellion and stiff-necked obstinacy of messieurs of Geneva will incline them to plunge through despair into this accursed error.† That would cause loss and damage to the duke, and little credit to the emperor, considering that Geneva is a fief of the empire. Here is the expedient the emperor has hit upon. He orders both the duke and Geneva to lay before him within two months their titles, rights, and privileges, and his majesty will then decide. As for the prelates, the bishop, and the canons, the emperor recommends both them and the duke to bring their quarrels to an end. By so doing the duke will get rid of a great load of trouble, and will have the prelates better under his direction and obedience.' After a few other communications, the chancellor withdrew with the commander, and Bellegarde immediately sent off a despatch conveying this decision to the duke.

\* The name is illegible in the manuscript, but it looks like *Commes*.

† Is the Reformation or union with Switzerland meant here? probably both of them.



The Sieur de Bellegarde left Augsburg not long after, and returned to Turin, determined to urge his master more than ever to destroy independence and the Reformation in Geneva at one blow. What he had seen at Augsburg, and the dangers with which German protestantism threatened the supremacy of the pope and of the emperor, had increased his zeal. The institutions of the middle ages seem to have had at that time no friend more fanatical and no champion more zealous than the active, intelligent, devoted, cruel courtier who had put Levrier to death at the castle of Bonne. ‘My lord,’ he said to the duke, ‘consider the peril to which you are exposed in this business of Geneva, either because of the neighbours who are so near, and are ravening wolves, or because of the little faith the world now has in all the qualities, sound right, and reasons a man may have. What will happen if we do not remain masters in the struggle with this new sect? What vexations, losses, and cares, you know that better than I do. They want to keep you in good humour, my lord, but it is only the better to make game of you, and to increase at your expense, on this side of the mountains or on that—everywhere, in fact. You have documents in your chamber to show that the Genevans used to pay you toll and subsidy; that they helped to portion the daughters of your house; and, further, that they gave your predecessors aid in time of war, and that in time of peace they appealed to them in their suits and sentences. . . . And now what have they done? They have deprived you of the vidamy, they have taken from you the castle on the island, they have committed much injustice to the prejudice of your rights, and have been guilty of murder

and other intolerable evils. . . Worse still . . . they are joining *that perverse sect* in order to complete their ruin.

‘ But we shall soon put an end to it all, my lord. You have an emperor at your service on whom everything depends. Will they dare be wicked and rebellious in his presence? . . . Firstly, the emperor will replace them under your authority, as you and your ancestors had them. . . Next, for their rebellion and the crimes they have committed, he will condemn them to be deprived of some privilege—of that which is most injurious to you. Finally, he will build for you, for your government, a castle or fortress in the city, in whatever part you like, and exact from the Genevans for the support of the garrison a tax to be paid every year. The city will thus be kept well in subjection. As for the bishops, the emperor will command them to pay you the respect which belongs to the holy empire, as being its representative; he will order them to obey you like himself, and will restore them to all obedience towards you . . . considering also that *the time approaches* for their *general reformation, as is but reasonable*. And if the said people of Geneva will not obey (as their unreason may incline them) the emperor will put them under the ban of the empire as rebels, and you shall seize them. . . . *You will make them your subjects entirely, confiscating all their privileges and possessions; and thus you will be for ever established rightfully in Geneva.*’\*

We should not perhaps have quoted the words of the Sieur de Bellegarde at such length, if the document

\* MS. *Memoir of Bellegarde*, Turin Archives.

from which they are extracted had not been hitherto unknown. His allegations were false. No presents had ever been made by the city of Geneva to the dukes of Savoy without a special act declaring that the liberality was spontaneous and without prejudice for the future. The vidamy was a fief conferred by the bishop, which made the holder of it an officer of the latter. Lastly, the dukes of Savoy were not vicars of the emperor. But if Bellegarde's allegations as to the past were false, his schemes as to the future were outrageous. A strong fortress shall be built in Geneva, the citizens shall pay the garrison, and a brutal serfdom shall withdraw them from that *perverse sect* and keep them for ever in strict obedience under the yoke of their master! As for the bishops, they shall be compelled to obey the duke, especially as the time of *their general reformation* approaches! It would appear, then, that in the sixteenth century already *reason* (as Bellegarde says) demanded the abolition of the temporal power of ecclesiastical princes. Were they more advanced then than in our days? I think not. This rude policy aimed merely at substituting the despotism of princes for the despotism of bishops, as being stricter and more effectual. Lastly—the end crowns the work—if the Genevans resist, they shall be conquered, and all their power and property confiscated. In this manner, concludes the advocate of these revolutionary measures, the rights of his master will be for ever secured. This is what Geneva had to expect from Savoy; what had it to hope from the bishop?

Pierre de la Baume, indignant at the duke's pretensions, had said to him one day proudly: 'I am subject

only to the pope.’\* He had lately softened down, in appearance at least, and was drawing nearer to Savoy, so that the Genevans said: ‘Our prince is reconciled with our enemy.’† We are now transported into quite another sphere. If the duke wished to reign by force, the bishop desired to use stratagem. The pastor of Geneva was not in a position to build a fortress in the middle of the city; it was by means of negotiations and intrigues that he would crush the Reformation and liberty. The lion was succeeded by the serpent. Pierre de la Baume, knowing the influence Besançon Hugues had over his fellow-citizens, solicited his help. He wrote to him, during the last year of Besançon’s life, a series of letters we have also had the good fortune to discover.‡ The bishop and the citizen of Geneva were not such good friends as they had been. The former addressed many reproaches to the latter, either because Hugues was dissatisfied on political grounds, or perhaps because his catholicism had cooled down a little in his frequent interviews with the reformed of Berne.

On the 11th of April 1532, the bishop, then at Arbois, impatient to recover his former power in Geneva, resolved to open the campaign, and wrote to Hugues: ‘Besançon, I have always done for you everything that I could; you have seen it by the results; I do not speak to reproach you, but I am astonished that you should requite me so ill. If you had as good an

\* Turin Archives, No. 19, bundle 12.

† Ibid. 12th category, bundle 3.

‡ Ibid. 12th category, bundle 4. The handwriting is almost as illegible as that of Bellegarde’s memoir.



affection for me, as I have given you opportunity, you would have *barked* (aboyé) so well, that my authority would not have fallen to its present depression, and I should not have the trouble, which I must take, of restoring it. I well know the excuses that you can make. . . . None is so deaf as he that will not hear. Nevertheless I have trusted in you, and I still trust in your well-known fidelity. So act, I pray, that I may have cause to continue it. In a little time I shall send one of my people to Geneva on business; you will hear the rest from him. I pray God that He will give you, Besançon, all that you desire.\* Ten days later, Machard, the bishop's secretary, came from Arbois to Geneva, charged with a political mission, and bearer of another letter for Hugues, which, either on account of the delicate matters to which it related, or because Machard was to explain them verbally, is rather obscure. Hugues hastened to read the prelate's missive: 'I send my secretary,' said De la Baume, 'on certain business, which I have instructed him to communicate to you first. You will give credit to what he says in my name as if I said it myself. I desire that the affair in question may come to a good end, in order to gratify the princes from whom it proceeds (the emperor and the duke, no doubt). Set a willing hand to it, so that there may be friendly relations between me and my subjects and the said princes, which is a thing of no trifling consequence to all the republic.'

Hugues did not care to enter into the plans formed by the bishop in accord with the princes; so that when Machard returned to Arbois and made his report, his

\* Turin Archives.

master was much annoyed. He complained of the excessive boldness and strange insubordination of the Genevans, and wrote bitterly to the ex-syndic. ‘Besançon,’ he said, ‘the news that you have given me of Berne are a little compensation for the insolence and ill practices that you and my subjects show towards my officers, usurping my jurisdiction under the shelter of certain words that you have uttered before the general council. . . . I intend to uphold this same jurisdiction in opposition to you . . . . Indeed I have done so against greater folks. . . . I hope that you will return to your duty and become my subjects once more. That will give me the opportunity of being a good master. Otherwise do not trust to me. . . . Matters shall not remain where you have left them. Communicate this to my subjects, if need be.’

The bishop was angry with Geneva, as this letter shows—sometimes more, sometimes less, but always restless and agitated. One day he was told of something Hugues had said which delighted him; not long after he would hear of something the Genevans had done that increased his anger. About the 13th May when he was informed that Hugues had displayed a very good feeling towards him, the prelate was quite delighted, and wrote to him: ‘I have been informed of your intention to declare everywhere the wrong that my subjects are doing me. You will show me, I hope, by good actions, when I shall require it of you, that you are not a man of *two words*.’ But ere long other tidings reached the bishop. He was filled with trouble, fear, and pain; and gave way to all the emotions of a restless and suspicious policy. He had fits of anger;

he became rash, violent; then he would suddenly collapse; he had neither strength, feeling, nor courage. In general, however, it was indignation that prevailed in him. Not one of his officers or of the canons (for there was a collegiate church at Arbois) understood him, or consoled him, or encouraged him. He was alone . . . . and vented his agitation in his apartments or in his gardens. 'I think the answers made by my subjects very strange,' he said, 'I should be sorry to be angry with them.'\* A few days later he wrote: 'I am quite amazed. . . . It seems that my subjects do not understand their business . . . . If they do not mend, I shall be forced to proceed in another way . . . . which will displease me. . . . It seems to me that they would do well to obey their lord, and not act the prince. . . . It cannot last.'†

But it did last. Geneva, where they were listening to Olivetan, where they were placarding everywhere, by the side of the pardon of Rome, 'the great general pardon' of Jesus Christ, where the council unanimously ordered the Gospel to be preached 'according to the truth, without any mixture of fable; '‡—Geneva, whatever Pierre de la Baume might say or do, was separating from the bishop and the pope. On the 3d September (1532), the bishop, more exasperated than ever, wrote again to Besançon Hugues, but with an increase of ill-humour. 'I am displeased with the way my subjects treat me from day to day, declaring that they will rise against my authority. . . . That will last as long as it can. . . . I have always been long-suffering;

\* Letter dated the eve of Pentecost.

† Dated 1st July.

‡ Vol. II. book III. chap. xv. pp. 615—634.

but now it would be better for me to be angry. . . . . If I attempt to do anything from which the Genevans will reap neither pleasure nor profit . . . . . they must not be surprised. . . . . Certainly I have little to thank my servants or my friends for serving me so badly . . . . . I think, Besançon, that you desire what is right, but I should like to see the fruits. The people always find excuses in you. . . . They say that I have allowed their proceedings. . . I do not understand that *dance*, and I affirm that I said nothing with that intention, from which may God keep them.

‘THE BISHOP OF GENEVA.’\*

It was reported at Geneva that the bishop was willing to make some concessions, that he had said so privately, and the huguenots took advantage of it to assert their independence. On the 28th November Pierre de la Baume wrote to Besançon Hugues from the Tour de Mai: ‘Besançon, I have seen what you wrote touching the mode of proceeding against my authority and to the detriment of my church. I know whence that comes . . . . . except that I have always been given to understand that, according to the common opinion, my subjects would have been much better guided and would have obeyed me better than they have done, if you had been willing to set your hand to it, as you had promised me, endeavouring to procure the peace of the city, which suffers the greatest loss on my part. As to what you write about being under my displeasure, the only regret I feel as regards you is that you have not been willing to do what you promised. The recompense I made you was to the

\* Turin Archives.



end that you might keep my possessions in peace, but they are more than ever in war. It is entirely your fault if my jurisdiction is not still kept up. I write to you in order that you may perform your duty . . . . You will do me a pleasure: I would not have so many words to be without result . . . . . As for me I am accustomed to do *something vigorously* . . . . *I shall consider what it must be.*'

Such are the threatening words which close the correspondence of Pierre de la Baume with Besançon Hugues. Until now all traces of this great citizen had been lost after the 26th September 1532. If the letter we have just given belongs to this year, that limit would be shortened by two months. He must have died between the 28th November 1532 and the 18th February 1533.\*

Thus the bishop, continually engrossed with Geneva, thought of nothing but recovering his former power. But the independence of that city had enemies more formidable still. Charles V. had ordered the Genevans to drive the Reformation from their walls. 'Full of anxiety for your soul's health,' he wrote to them, 'and learning that certain new opinions and sects are beginning to swarm among you,† we exhort you seriously not to admit them, to extirpate them, and to set about it with the utmost diligence, not to permit anything to be taught among you in the leastwise

\* In a document at Basle under the latter date, the *late* (feu) Besançon Hugues is mentioned. Galiffe, *Hugues*, p. 459.

† 'Novas quasdam opiniones et sectas apud vos pullulare cœpisse.' —Turin Archives. We found this letter, which appears to have been hitherto unknown, in the national archives at Turin. Geneva, bundle 12, No. 47.

opposed to the decrees and traditions of your ancestors; on the contrary, to preserve with unshaken constancy the faith, rites, and ceremonies that you have received from your fathers. You will thus receive a worthy reward from Almighty God, and will merit from us every sort of gratitude.' Geneva had not obeyed the orders of the puissant emperor. The affairs of Germany had at first prevented him from constraining the little city to follow his sovereign orders, which even the barbarous tribes of the new world obeyed. But now the treaty of Nuremberg was signed; Charles having come to terms with the protestants of Germany might easily keep the promise he had made to his brother-in-law through Bellegarde, and assist him against the huguenots of Geneva.

The perfidious murderer of Levrier was beginning to hope that it would be possible to found a stronghold in Geneva, with its ditches and lofty walls, flanked with towers and bastions, and a strong garrison of halberdiers, arquebusiers, and artillerymen, who would keep the city and country in complete subjection under the yoke of their master. When Gessler was sent in the name of Austria to destroy the liberties of the Swiss, did he not build a fortress above Altorf—*Zwing-Uri*, the yoke of Uri? and had not the free children of those mountains to atone for the smallest sparks of independence by long and costly imprisonment in gloomy dungeons? Had not Pharaoh set the example in Egypt? . . . Why should not they do the same to subdue the huguenots? Fortresses, cannons, arquebusses, chains . . . . . this was what Geneva had to expect. Before any great length of time the Genevans were really to see a formidable force

marching against them, commissioned to carry out the plans of the emperor and the duke. But God's providence had always kept the city, and at this very moment a new force, the pledge of liberty, was about to be given it. The Gospel of the Son of God was about to enter its walls. But *he whom the Son maketh free, shall be free indeed.*

## CHAPTER VII.

## THE REFORMERS AND THE REFORMATION ENTER GENEVA.

(OCTOBER 1532.)

ON one fine autumn day (2nd October), Farel and Saunier 'having finished their journey through Piedmont,' reached that beautiful neighbourhood where the Alps and the Jura, drawing near each other, form a rich valley, in the midst of which calmly sleep the pure waters of an azure lake. They soon distinguished the three old towers of the cathedral of Geneva rising high above the houses. They pressed their horses, whose speed was relaxed through fatigue, and entered the city of the huguenots. They had been directed to the Tour Perce,\* which they found in a street situated on the left bank of the Rhone, and bearing its name. They stopped in front of the inn, dismounted from their horses, spoke to the landlord, and took up their quarters under his roof.

One of their first thoughts, after resting themselves, was to inform Robert Olivetan of their arrival. Calvin's cousin, who was still tutor to Jean Chau-temps' children, hastened to them, delighted at the coming of his brethren. Farel desired to consult

\* Tour percée. The sign of this inn was in existence until recently; there was a *hole in the tower*.



with him on the best means of advancing the knowledge of the Gospel in Geneva; but another idea had also occupied him during his journey. Knowing how learned Olivetan was in Greek and Hebrew, he had cast his eyes on him to make the translation of the Bible which the Waldensian synod had decided upon. Farel having spoken to him about it, Olivetan exclaimed in alarm: 'I cannot accept such a commission, considering the great difficulty of the work and my own weakness.'\* Farel did not admit the excuse, and continued to solicit his friend, who would not give way. 'You could do this work much better yourself,' he said to the travellers. But Farel believed that God gives every man a calling for which He has prepared him, and that Olivetan was a scholar while he was an evangelist. 'God has not given me leisure,' said Farel, 'He calls me to another work. He wills me to sow the pure seed of the Word in His field, and water it and make it flourish like the garden of Eden.'† He dropped the subject, however, in order to talk with Olivetan about the evangelisation of Geneva.

Chautemps' tutor, who had so often sunk under the weight of his task, and so earnestly called for a stronger hand, looked upon Farel as one sent from heaven. But how to begin? The evangelist of Orbe took from his pocket the letters given him at Berne for some of the chief huguenots. Olivetan saw that a door was opening for the Gospel, and without loss of time the two friends went out to deliver the letters to their addresses. Olivetan gave Farel the information he required, and explained to him that although some

\* Olivetan's Bible, *Apologie du translateur*.

† Ibid.

of those to whom he was introduced inclined to the side of the Gospel, the majority were content to throw off the Romish superstitions, and were simply true patriots.

The huguenots having opened the letters that Farel presented, found that the bearer was William Farel, preacher of the Gospel, and that their Bernese friends invited them to hear him speak. This was great news. No name was better known than Farel's in the districts bathed by the lakes of Geneva, Morat, Bienne, and Neuchatel. The huguenots, delighted to see him, looked attentively at him, and some of them reflected on such an unexpected incident, which religious and political motives rendered most important in their eyes. Friends of the Reformation had often told them that the independence of Geneva would never be secure until the dominion of the bishop and the pope had given place to that of the Gospel, and now the Gospel was knocking at their doors in the person of Farel. Was it not he who had filled Aigle, Morat, Neuchatel, Valengin, Orbe, and Grandson with the evangelical doctrine? Political men hoped that at his voice the temporal dominion of the church would fall, and the phantoms of the middle ages, which still entangled liberty, would flee away in alarm to distant hiding-places. Religious men, who had found pleasure in the words of Am Thun, of Olivetan, and of the Gospel more especially, expected that this great preacher would make the light of heaven to shine in their hearts. All, therefore, expressed themselves ready to hear him,\* and Farel,

\* Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 3.

saying he should be happy to see them at his inn, took his leave.

The news of the reformer's arrival spread through the city in a moment.\* 'Let us go and hear him,' said the huguenots; 'it is the man they call *the scourge of the little priests*.'† But the nuns, bigots, and friars were filled with anger. 'A shabby little preacher,' said the sisters of St. Claire; 'one Master William, a native of Gap in Dauphiny, has just arrived in the city.'‡ Every one prepared for the morrow.

On the morning of the 3d of October, the most notable of the huguenots left their houses to go to the Tour Perce. They went singly, or at the most two or three together, with a certain fear. One after another the following persons might have been seen entering the inn: the amiable and active Ami Porral, one of the syndics of the year; Baudichon de la Maison Neuve, who had stuck up the 'Great Pardon of God;' syndic Robert Vandel and his brother Pierre — all these intimate acquaintances of the bishop; Claude Roset, secretary of state in the following year, and father of the chronicler; syndic Claude Savoy, one of the most zealous defenders of independence; Jean Chautemps, Olivetan's patron; Dominic Arlod, afterwards syndic; Stephen Dada, descended from an illustrious Milanese family, and properly called d'Adda, from the city of that name; Claude Salomon,

\* 'Percrebuit rumor de Farelli adventu.'—Spanheim, *Geneva restituta*, p. 43.

† 'Sacrificulorum flagellum.'—Ibid.

‡ La Sœur J. de Jussie, *le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 46. Choupard MSS.; Roset MSS. liv. III. ch. 1.

the friend of the poor and the sick; Claude Bernard; Jean Goulaz, who had torn down the bill of the Romish jubilee from the pillar of the cathedral; Jean Sourd, Claude de Genève, and lastly, the energetic Ami Perrin, who several times syndic, captain-general, and ambassador of the Republic at Paris, showed much zeal for the Reformation at first, but afterwards incurred severe reproach.\* These citizens, who were the *élite* of Geneva, with several other persons of less distinction, arrived at the reformers' lodgings. The landlord of the Tour Perce introduced them into a private room where they found Farel and Saunier. The conversation began.

The two evangelists were full of esteem for the men who were struggling with such courage for independence and liberty against powerful enemies. They were not slow, however, to observe that if, in a political light, they held the most elevated sentiments, there were great deficiencies in them in a religious light. The huguenots wanted neither pope nor priests; but it was because of the tyranny of the one, and the licentious conduct of the others;† as for the true doctrine of the Gospel and the necessity of a moral transformation in themselves, they had not troubled themselves about it. There was also a great void in their religious system. Before they could become good protestants and men morally strong, friends at once of order and liberty, this blank must be filled

\* Froment, *Gestes*, p. 4. Galiffe, *Notices généalogiques*, &c.

† 'Cives multi non inviti, etsi nonnullos, non tam pietatis cura, quam Romanæ tyrannidis odium movebat.'—MS. of Benedict Turretini, entitled *Initium et progressus Reformationis quæ facta est Genevæ*, in the Berne Library, MS. *Hist. Helv.* v. p. 125.



up. They felt it themselves, and told Farel they desired nothing better than to be instructed. The landlord brought in a few benches and stools for them, and then Farel, having Saunier near him, took his station before a little table. He placed a Bible on it, and began to speak from the Word of God. An audience so select, an opportunity so important for announcing the Gospel, had perhaps never been offered to the reformer. He had before him the earliest champions of modern liberty. These men had recognised the errors in the state, he must now show them the errors in the church; they must learn that if man may throw off despotism in earthly things, it is more lawful still to throw it off in heavenly things.

Farel undertook the task; he showed the huguenots from Scripture 'that they had been abused until now by their priests; that the latter amused them with silly tales that had no substance in them, and further, that these cheats (*affronteurs*) allured them, if they felt it necessary, by flattery, and gave the rein to their lusts.' He added that neither councils nor popes would teach them to know Jesus Christ, but Holy Scripture only; and urged them to abandon errors and abuses, whose danger and absurdity he forcibly pointed out to them. The huguenots listened to him attentively. 'They had no great sentiment or knowledge or fear of God, but they already aspired to the religion that had been adopted at Berne,' says a manuscript of the seventeenth century; 'and God, seeing his people of Geneva stagnating in security, and wishing by an effort of his mercy to show them the divine sweetness of his clemency, animated the courage of his

servants, Farel and Saunier.\* The simple movement by which Farel, setting aside all patristic, synodal, scholastic, and papal traditions, turned reverently towards the fountain-head, and drank from the Word of God the faith that he preached, specially struck his hearers. They rose, thanked him, and left the room, saying as they retired that it seemed right to substitute the Holy Scriptures for the teaching of the pope. This was the principle of an immense transformation. The Reformation had taken its first step in Geneva when the placards of the 'general pardon' of God had been stuck up: it now took the second step.†

'There was a great sensation in the city,' said Froment. Some of the hearers, returning to their families or their friends, astonished them by saying that henceforth their master should be neither M. La Baume, nor M. Medicis or even M. St. Peter, 'but the Lord Jesus Christ alone.' The astonishment was still greater in the political and ecclesiastical bodies. Hitherto they had only had to deal with the heroes of liberal emancipation; now they were in presence of the champions of the religious movement. 'This thing having come to the notice of the council, canons, and priests of the city, they were suddenly troubled and disturbed.'‡ The monks were either astounded or very angry, while the nuns of St. Claire were quite alarmed at 'this wretched preacher, who was beginning to speak

\* *Hist. de la Réf. de Genève*, MS. of Badollet, regent of the college of Geneva in the seventeenth century. Berne library, *Hist. Helv.* v. p. 125.

† Froment, *Gestes*, p. 5. Gautier MS. Spon I. p. 467. Roser and Choupard MSS.

‡ Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 3.

secretly at his quarters, in a room, seeking to infect the people with his heresy '\* All of them foresaw that this act would have innumerable and fatal consequences.

There was soon a second meeting. Many of those who had not been at the first wished to be present at this; and from the city, the Molard, and the Rhone bridge, many citizens took their way towards the Tour Perce. There were no women among them, but the men filled every corner of the room, anxious to hear the Gospel. As Farel on the former occasion had spoken particularly of scripture, he now addressed the huguenots on the subject of living grace. He showed them that it was not the pardon of the Church, but the pardon of God, that saves. Those prelates and masters who, puffed out with magnificent titles, were continually recommending pious works, were (he said) building the temple of God with straw and stubble, instead of bringing together the living stones of which scripture speaks. He maintained that when the priests spoke so much of penance, vows, masses, fasts, aves, macerations, flagellations, indulgences, pilgrimages, invocations to the Virgin and the saints, they hardly left Jesus Christ the hundredth part of the work of redemption. Farel and Saunier repeated strongly that pardon resides wholly in the Saviour, and not in part only, 'at which those who heard him took great pleasure.' Some meditated as they went away on what they had heard, and that silent conversation of the soul speaking with its God began in the quiet chamber of many a house. 'By this means a goodly number of

\* La Sœur de Jussie, *le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 46.

† Choupard MS.

Genevans received a knowledge of the Gospel.'† Some of them—Baudichon de la Maison-Neuve and Claude Salomon amongst others—earnestly besought Farel to come and explain the Scriptures in their own houses.

This second meeting added considerably to the alarm in the catholic camp, and the commotion was particularly great among the women, who were at that time the main support of the papacy in Geneva. 'There is not one of them,' said a reformer, 'that has any desire to learn the truth, so tainted are they with the breath, teaching, life, and conversation of their priests. There is a great intimacy between them; some are their brothers, others their friends, neighbours, gossips . . . . I shall say nothing more at present,' he added, 'to save the honour of the ladies.'\* The priests told their female parishioners that if they did not turn out these unbelievers everything was lost. The Genevan ladies, therefore, entreated their husbands and brothers to expel the heretic preachers. A few citizens, who cared very little about the Reformation, were carried away by their wives, and proceeding angry and heated to the Tour Perce, desired Farel and Saunier to leave Geneva at once, if they did not wish to be turned out forcibly. 'If we cannot maintain what we say,' replied the reformers, 'we offer ourselves to death.'† Having God for the author of their faith, they were tranquil in the midst of tempests.‡

Thus, despite all the efforts of the husbands urged by their wives, and of the wives urged by the priests,

\* Froment, *Gestes*, p. 4.

† Ibid. Choupard MS.

‡ Calvin.



Farel remained. At that time a great agitation prevailed in Geneva: canons, rectors, monks, and curates ran up and down, talking with one another, 'and holding counsel together, asked what they should do with those persons.' \*

The magistrates, noticing the commotion occasioned by the arrival of Farel and Saunier in the city, summoned them to appear before the bench, and met to consult as to what should be said and done to them. The council had not made up their minds either for or against the Reformation, and many of the members arrived at the town-hall not knowing clearly what they ought to do. Ex-syndic Balard, who was then discharging the functions of vidame, a zealous Catholic whom Froment calls (probably with some exaggeration) 'the head servant of the priests,' was for immediate repression, and a few were ready to vote with him. The majority, composed of men of moderate views, had no desire to offend the canons and priests, but feared still more to offend Berne. William Hugues, the premier syndic and Besançon's brother, was rather favourable to the reformers. Only a small number of decided huguenots were convinced that the new doctrine alone could free them from the bickerings of the bishops and the dukes. Farel and Saunier were conducted to the town-hall and taken into the council chamber. As they entered, everybody looked with curious eye on that man with keen look and red beard who was setting all the country in a blaze from the Alps to the Jura. One of the magistrates most devoted to the Church addressing Farel rudely, said: 'It is you then

\* Choupard MS.

that do nothing but disturb the world ; it is your tongue that is stirring up tumult everywhere and trumpeting rebellion. You are a busybody who have come here only to create discord. We order you to depart from the city instantly.' The angry looks of some of the councillors were at the same time turned upon Farel, who being regarded as the scourge of the priests, ' was for that reason supremely hated by them.'\* The reformer contained himself, and answered : ' I am not a deluder, I am not a trumpet of sedition ; I simply proclaim the truth.† I am ready to prove out of God's Word that my doctrine is true, and,' added he in a voice trembling with emotion, ' not only to sacrifice my ease but to shed the last drop of my blood for it.'

The reformer's noble simplicity touched the members of the council, and supplied the huguenots with sufficient motives to undertake his defence. Farel's judges appeared to be softened by his moderation. Then calling to mind that St. Paul under similar circumstances had invoked the respected name of imperial Rome, the evangelist resolved to follow his example. ' Most honoured lords,' he said, ' are you not allies and co-burgesses of Berne? Know, then, that my lords of Berne, who have at heart to advance the Gospel, have given me letters wherein they bear witness to my innocence and doctrine, and beg you to hear me preach peacefully, assuring you that by so doing you will confer a pleasure on them.' At the same time Farel produced the credentials with which their excel-

\* Ruchat, III. p. 177.

† ' Se non seditionis tubam sed veritatis præconem esse.'—Spanheim, *Geneva restituta*, p. 43.

lencies had furnished him. The syndics took the letter. 'If you condemn me unheard,' continued Farel, 'you insult God, and also, as you see, my lords of Berne.' The latter plea touched the magistrates of Geneva closely; and, accordingly, changing countenance, they gently dismissed Farel and Saunier without imposing any punishment on them, but begging them only not to disturb the public tranquillity by new doctrines. The two ministers quitted the council chamber.\*

Meanwhile an episcopal council was being held; and jurists, canons, and priests were assembling at the house of the grand vicar. Monseigneur de Gingins, abbot of Bonmont, deliberated as to what should be done. The Reformation and the reformers, of whom there had been so much talk these fifteen years, were in Geneva at last. The rock so long suspended over their heads was at length detached from the mountain, and threatened to destroy everything. What was to be done? The tumult was still greater in the city than in the grand vicar's house. A crowd, attracted by the summons of Farel and Saunier before the council, 'was scattered up and down the streets,' and priests paraded the city, 'carrying arms under their frocks.'† The reformers had some trouble to reach their lodgings.

The episcopal council prolonged its sittings. Monseigneur de Bonmont, a sincere but moderate and liberal catholic, was ill at ease. Seeing angry faces and flashing eyes around him, he represented that it would

\* Choupard MS. Spanheim, *Geneva restituta*, p. 43.

† Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 4.

be necessary to proceed cautiously and in accordance with justice. Some of those present were exasperated, for in their eyes De Gingins' moderation was flagrant treason. In their opinion it was necessary to prosecute immediately not only the foreign preachers, but 'all who inviting them into their houses (as Maison-Neuve for instance) to converse about the Gospel, wished to live differently from what their forefathers, pastors, and bishops had taught them.' The most reverend vicar represented that persons were not convicted without being heard, that they must summon these strangers before them, call upon them to explain their doctrine, and then they would be sentenced upon full knowledge of the facts. This alarmed the council, and Dom Stephen Piard, proctor to the chapter, exclaimed with a frown :\* 'If we dispute, all our office is at an end.'† He urged that 'to discuss theological questions was to overlook the authority of the church; that we must believe because Rome has spoken; that these people with their Bibles were subtle spirits and dangerous adversaries, . . . and that the authority of the chapter would be overthrown if they permitted any disputation.'

Dom Stephen enjoyed a certain authority; the assembly was about to refuse to hear Farel, when it was opposed by some of the members who were most notorious for their fanatical zeal. In the sixteenth century not only jurists regarded it as a duty to condemn heretics to death, but devout persons, laymen

\* 'Supercilio adducto.'—Spanheim, *Geneva restituta*, p. 44.

† 'Si disputetur, totum ministerium nostrum destruetur.'—Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 5. This is differently reported: Froment and Choupard give *ministerium*; Roset and Spanheim *mysterium*. I have preferred the former as the better reading.



as well as priests, thought they did an acceptable thing to God by putting them to death. It would appear that these latter persons had made up their minds to this meritorious work. 'Having deliberated to kill Farel and his companion,' says a manuscript, 'they found the best means of getting them to come would be by giving them to understand that they desired to debate with them.' The pious sister Jeanne de Jussie corroborates this statement.\* The conspirators carried the proposal to summon Farel. He was never to go out again from the vicar-general's house ; but first of all it was necessary for him to enter it. Machard, the bishop's secretary, was deputed to summon Farel and Saunier, and also Olivetan, 'to retract publicly, or to explain before the episcopal council what they had preached in the inn.'

Ere long something transpired of the plot of these fanatical ecclesiastics, and the huguenots, forming part of the little council at that moment assembled in the town-hall, represented to their colleagues that the priests had no other object than to draw the ministers into a trap. Accordingly the two chief magistrates, Hugues and Balard, accompanied Machard to the Tour Perce, to give a guarantee to Farel and his friends. Some persons suspected Balard of wishing to get Farel and Saunier into trouble. 'There is nothing more prejudicial to Geneva than division,' he said ; 'I wish those who disturb us were well out of us.' But he was neither a coward nor a traitor ; he was determined to send the reformers away from Geneva, but to protect

\* Choupard MS. La Sœur J. de Jussie, *le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 47.

their lives.’\* On reaching the inn the bishop’s secretary informed the evangelists that the episcopal council invited them to retract the doctrines they had taught, the presence of Balard and Hugues giving weight to the request. Farel answered: ‘We affirm these doctrines in the strongest way possible, and again offer to die if we cannot prove them out of scripture.’ ‘In that case,’ resumed Machard, ‘come before the episcopal council to discuss with the priests, and maintain what you have said.’ ‘No harm shall be done you,’ said the premier syndic and the vidame, ‘we pledge our word to it.’ Farel and Saunier, delighted with this opportunity of announcing the Gospel, set off, accompanied by Olivetan. They were calm and full of joy, doubtless not expecting what awaited them, but ready nevertheless to give up their lives.

\* *Mém. d’Archéologie de la Soc. d’Hist. de Genève*, x. p. cviii.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## THE REFORMERS ARE EXPELLED FROM GENEVA.

(OCTOBER 1532.)

WHILE the upper house of the clergy was sitting at the vicar-general's, the lower house had assembled in the streets. The armed curates and chaplains watched what was going on, and when they saw the premier syndic with ex-syndic Balard and the bishop's secretary enter the inn, they guessed that they were about to conduct Farel before the episcopal council, and had immediately made it known to their followers, to the women and the common people. When the three reformers, accompanied by the three Genevans, came out, there was already a little crowd in front of the Tour Perce. The number increased as they proceeded along the streets which lead from the banks of the Rhone to the top of the hill; but the populace and the women were content to threaten and jeer at the reformers, crying out as loud as they could, 'Look at the dogs, look at the dogs.'\* Thanks to the presence of the magistrates, the three reformers arrived safe and sound in the Rue des Chanoines and entered the house of the

\* 'Ce sont des cagnes, ce qui veut dire (adds Froment) ce sont des chiens.'

vicar episcopal. As those who were within as well as those who were without had equally sworn Farel's death, it seemed impossible for him to escape. The three evangelicals had to wait some time; in fact the syndics had preceded them, and required of the episcopal council that no harm should be done the ministers if they freely explained their doctrines. This engagement having been taken, Farel, Saunier, and Olivetan were called in, the two magistrates remaining in the assembly to secure order.

The abbot-vicar of Bonmont presided; on his right and left sat the canons, the bishop's officers, and the head priests, all in their sacerdotal robes. The missionary, simply but decently dressed, came forward followed by his two friends, and all three remained standing before the assembly. The official, Messire de Veigy, a learned and eloquent man, was ordered to speak. 'William Farel,' he said, 'tell me who has sent you, for what reason you come here, and in virtue of what authority you speak?' In Veigy's opinion it was necessary for the preacher to be sent by some Romish ecclesiastical authority. Farel replied with simplicity, 'I am sent by God, and I am come to announce his word.' 'Poor wretch!' exclaimed the priests, as they shrugged their shoulders. The official resumed: 'God has sent you, you say; how is that? Can you show by any manifest sign that you are come in His name? As Moses before Pharaoh, will you prove to us by miracles that you really come from God? If you cannot, then show us the licence of our most reverend prelate the Bishop of Geneva. Preacher never yet preached in his diocese without his leave.'



Here the official paused; and then disdainfully scanning the reformer from head to foot, he said: 'You do not wear the dress that is usual for those who are accustomed to announce the Word of God to us. . . . You are dressed like a soldier or a brigand. . . . How is it you are so bold as to preach? Is it not forbidden by a decree of holy church for laymen to preach in public under pain of excommunication? That is contained in the decretals of our holy mother church. . . . You are, therefore, a deceiver and a bad man.'\* Farel believed that it was his duty to announce the Word of God, because Jesus Christ had said, *Preach the Gospel to every creature*. He thought that the true successors of the apostles were those who conformed to Christ's order, and that (as Calvin says), 'the pope of Rome and all his tribe had no claim to that apostolical succession which they alleged, since they no longer cared for the doctrine of Christ.'† The clergy in whose presence he was standing did not allow him time to speak. At last they had before them the terrible heretic of whom they had been talking so many years. The official's words had still further aroused their passions; they could no longer contain themselves. Pale with anger they shuddered and clattered with their feet as they sat. At last the mine exploded; they all spoke at once, pouring insult and abuse on the reformer. Their excitement carried them away; they rose from their seats, rushed upon him, and pulling him now this way, now that, exclaimed, 'Come, Farel, you wicked devil, what business

\* La Sœur de Jussie, *le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 47.

† Calvin, *Harmonie évangélique*, I. p. 757.

have you to go up and down, disturbing all the world? . . . Are you baptized? Where were you born? Where do you come from? Why did you come here? Tell us by whose authority you preach? Are you not the man who propagated Luther's heresies at Aigle and Neuchatel, and threw the whole country into confusion? Who sent you into this city?' The noise and tumult would not permit either Farel or the grand vicar to speak; the weapons were heard to rattle which some of the priests carried under their frocks. Farel remained still and silent in the midst of this raging sea. At last Messire de Bonmont succeeded in interposing his authority, made his colleagues resume their seats, and silence was restored.\* Then the reformer, nobly lifting up his head, said with great simplicity, 'My lords, I am not a devil. I was baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and if I journey to and fro, it is that I may preach Jesus Christ—Jesus Christ crucified, dead for our sins, and risen again for our justification, so that whosoever believeth in Him shall have everlasting life. As an ambassador of Jesus Christ I am compelled to teach Him to all who are willing to hear me. I have, however, no other right to speak than that which the commandment of God gives to me His servant. My only aim is so to discharge my duty that all the world may receive salvation, and it is for this cause and for no other that I am come into this city. Having been brought before you to give an account of my faith, I am ready to do so, not only at this moment, but as many times as you please to

\* Froment, *Gestes*, p. 5. Choupard MS.

hear me peaceably. What I have preached and still preach is the pure truth and not a heresy, and I will maintain it even unto death. As for what you say about my disturbing the land and this city in particular, I will answer as Elijah did to Ahab, *I have not troubled Israel, but thou and thy father's house.* Yes, it is you and yours who trouble the world by your traditions, your human inventions, and your dissolute lives.\*

The priests, astonished at the calm, simple, free and spirited language of the reformer, had listened to him in silence so far, but the moment they heard him speak of their human inventions and irregular lives, his words were like daggers and disturbed their wicked consciences. It might have been said that the infernal deities (it is the expression of a reformer) were hovering about them and left them no repose. 'They fixed their burning eyes on Farel; they gnashed their teeth,' says a manuscript; and one of them starting up in a passion said: 'Blasphematur, non amplius indigemus testibus. Reus est mortis.'† This was the signal for a scene more savage than the former. All rose again, some impelled by violence and pride, others believing they were supporting the cause of religion, and exclaimed: 'To the Rhone, to the Rhone! kill him, kill him! It is better for this rascally Lutheran to die than permit him to trouble all the people.'‡ These words, without being those

\* Froment, *Gestes*, p. 6. Choupard MS. Choupard gives some features that are not found in Froment.

† He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? He is guilty of death.—Matth. xxvi. 65, 66.

‡ Froment, *Gestes*, p. 7. 'In Rhodanum, in Rhodanum! unum hunc Lutherum necari præstat.'—Turretin MS. in the Berne library.

which the high-priest uttered against Christ were very like them. Farel was struck by the resemblance. 'Speak the words of God and not of Caiaphas,' he exclaimed. At these words the exasperated priests could contain themselves no longer. They all started up together and shouted out: 'Kill him, kill the Lutheran hound!' Dom Bergeri, proctor to the chapter, still more excited than the others, urged them on, exclaiming in his Savoyard dialect: *Tapa, tapa!* (which, adds Froment, means 'Strike, strike!') The sentence was immediately carried into execution; they surrounded the three reformers; some caught hold of Farel, others of Saunier, and others of Olivetan. They abused them, beat them, spat in their faces, and uttered all sorts of cries, so that it was like a pandemonium. In the midst of all this uproar Farel and his companions 'preserved their patience and moderation.' The abbot of Bonmont, syndics Hugues and Balard, and even a few priests, ashamed of such a scene, tried to put an end to it. 'It is not well done,' said the abbot, 'have we not pledged our word and honour to them?' Syndic Hugues, a just, quick, and energetic man, disgusted with the behaviour of the ecclesiastics, broke out at last. 'You are wicked men,' he said; 'we brought you these men on your promise that no harm should be done them, and you want to beat and kill them before our faces. . . . I will go and set the great bell ringing to convoke the general council. The assembled people shall decide.' Hugues was leaving the room to go and put his threat into execution, when Balard, the other magistrate, desiring to prevent anything that might compromise the cause of Rome,



endeavoured to calm him. However the syndic's threat had produced its effect; the priests alarmed at the thought of a general assembly of the citizens, and fearing lest it should decree their expulsion from Geneva, returned to their seats rather ashamed of themselves. The abbot, taking advantage of this new lull, desired Farel and his friends to withdraw, in order that the episcopal council might deliberate. Farel left the room covered with spittle and severely bruised.\*

While the superior clergy were behaving in this way, the inferior clergy were assembling, and about eighty priests had collected before the house of the vicar-episcopal, 'all well armed with clubs to defend the holy catholic faith and prepared to die for it.' This mode of defending religion, so different from that of the first fathers of the church, has been made known to us through the reverend Sister Jeanne de Jussie. The priests were stout, resolute men; they had formed a plot and were there to carry it into execution. 'They wished,' adds Sister Jeanne, 'to put that wretch and his accomplices to a bitter death.'† Such was the exploit they contemplated, and for its accomplishment they carefully surrounded the grand-vicar's house. They filled the narrow area of the Puits St. Pierre and the Rue des Chanoines, and had even penetrated into M. de Bonmont's courtyard and garden, so that it was impossible for Farel to escape. The fanatical and agitated crowd,

\* 'Sputis madidatus et pugnīs contritus.'—Spanheim, *Geneva restituta*. Froment, *Gestes*, pp. 5-7. Choupard and Roset, MSS. &c.

† *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 17.

which had been there for some time, was beginning to grow impatient that the episcopal council sat so long. Farel and his two friends, when they had turned into a long gallery, could hear the raised voices of some of the members of the council, and the increasing noise of the crowd that filled the courtyard. But another danger threatened them.

One of the grand-vicar's servants, Francis Olard, surnamed Ginin, a violent man, stood at the end of the gallery, having been posted there arquebuss in hand, as a sentinel. He had listened to the tumult from within; the shouting from without excited and inflamed him. Was not this Farel the enemy of his masters—a heretic whom everybody wished dead? His weapon was ready: he levelled it at Farel and prepared to fire. Had the priests stationed Olard there for this purpose, as the chronicles say, or did he act of his own accord, being more fanatical than his masters, as the servants of political or ecclesiastical corporations often are? Be it as it may, the arquebusier pulled the trigger, the priming flashed . . . but the gun did not go off. Farel turning to him said coldly: 'I am not to be shaken by a popgun; your toy does not alarm me.'—'Verily,' said his friends, 'God of His mercy turned aside the blow, in order to preserve Farel for struggles still more formidable.'\*

Meanwhile the council were still deliberating, and many wished Farel to be put to death. Heresy in that age, as is but too well known, was punished capitally; but the magistrates pointed to the danger

\* 'Ictus tamen divina bonitate aversus, Deo servum suum certo periculo eripiente.'—Spanheim, *Geneva restituta*, p. 43. Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 3. Roset MS. liv. iii. ch. 1.

of using violence towards the preacher of the lords of Berne. Their opinion prevailed, and the reformers having been brought into the room again, the grand-vicar said: 'William Farel, leave my presence and this house, and within six hours get you gone from the city with your two companions, under pain of the stake. And know that if the sentence is not more severe, you must ascribe it to our kindness and to our respect for my lords of Berne.'—'You condemn us unheard,' said Farel. 'I demand a certificate to show at Berne that I have done my duty.'—'You shall not have one,' the abbot hastily replied; 'leave the room all of you, without a word more.'\*

The priests and people collected in front of the house, learning that Farel was about to appear, crowded one upon another, uttering angry cries. It would seem that the reformer heard them and stopped an instant, knowing full well what was in reserve for him. It was in truth a solemn moment, perhaps his last. 'The caitiff dared not come out,' said Sister Jeanne, afterwards Abbess of Annecy, 'for he had heard the noise made by the church people before the door, and feared they would put him to death.' Seeing that Farel hesitated, two of the senior canons addressed him coarsely: 'As you will not go out willingly, and in God's name,' they said, 'go out in the name of all the devils, whose minister and servant you are.' Thus spoke a few fanatical priests. Their God was the church, and there was no salvation for the sinner except in the sacrifice of the mass: in them imagination took the place of understanding, and passion of

\* La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme* p. 48.

judgment. They had no idea of the living faith which animated the hearts of Farel and his friends, and looked upon them as impious. Putting aside the holy authority and wise precepts of scripture, they had no other rule than strong attachment to their church and the excess of zeal which carried them away. Inflamed by violent passion they did not confine themselves to abuse. The sister of St. Claire is far from wishing to conceal their exploits: 'One of them,' she says, 'gave him a hard kick, the other struck him heavily on the head and face; and in great confusion they put him out with his two companions.'\*

Farel, Saunier, and Olivetan quitted the house, and thus escaped the ill-treatment of those reverend gentlemen. But turned out of doors by the canons, they fell from Scylla into Charybdis: they had to experience still more culpable excesses of religious fanaticism. The priests, chaplains, sacristans, and the furious populace assembled in the street, hooted, hissed, groaned, and howled; some threateningly flourished their weapons. It was like an impetuous hurricane that seemed as if it would sweep everything before it. It was a human tempest more terrible perhaps than that of the winds:

Venti, velut agmine facto,  
Qua data porta ruunt, et terras turbine perflant;  
Insequitur clamorque virum stridorque rudentum.†

On a sudden there was a movement in the crowd, those who were on the outside falling back in alarm

\* La sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain*, &c., pp. 47, 48.

† The raging winds rush through the hollow wound,  
And dance aloft in air, and skim along the ground;  
The cables crack, the sailors' fearful cries  
Ascend.

DRYDEN.



upon their comrades : there was a body of armed men approaching. At this time up came the syndics and all the watch with their halberds. ‘Pray, sir priests,’ said they, ‘do nothing rash.’ The mob gave way. ‘We are come to execute justice,’ added the magistrates. Upon this they took ‘the caitiff,’ placed him and his companions in the midst of the guard, and all marched off in the direction of the Tour Perce, the crowd parting right and left to make way for the escort. The priests, fourscore in number, kept together, forming a dark and agitated group, and so stationed themselves that the three ministers must necessarily pass before them on their road to the inn. They had heard that Farel and his friends were to be expelled from the city ; ‘but the worthy men could not be satisfied with this,’ says Sister Jeanne. Considering that the syndics and even the episcopal council refused to do justice to them, they were resolved to take the matter into their own hands. Just as the three preachers were passing in front of them, one of them rushed forward sword in hand upon Farel ‘to run him through.’\* One of the syndics who was at the reformer’s side saw him, caught the assassin by the arm, and stopped him. This act of the magistrate seriously grieved the devout. Laymen who prevented the clergy from killing their adversaries were looked upon as impious. ‘Many were chagrined,’ says the good nun innocently, ‘because the blow failed.’ The halberdiers closed their ranks, thrust the priests and their creatures aside, and the reformers continued on their way. The mob,

\* “ Pour le transpercer au travers du corps.”—La Sœur de Jussie, p. 48.

finding they could not touch the Lutherans, compensated themselves with hooting. In every street through which they passed, men and women cried out that they ought to be flung into the Rhone. At length the procession reached the Tour Perce; the reformers entered, and the syndics left a guard.

They must go—of that there could be no doubt. Farel and his friends might have been overwhelmed with sorrow, and have fainted in the midst of their work; but their Heavenly Master had said, *When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another.* (Matth. x. 23.) What grieved them was the thought of the generous men who had listened to them; these Farel was determined not to abandon. If the tempest obliged him to depart, he would take advantage of the first moment of calm weather to introduce into Geneva that Gospel which many huguenots desired with all their heart. The next day (4th October) a few citizens, friends of the reformer, rose early, got ready a boat near the Molard, and went to the Tour Perce to fetch the missionaries, hoping that if the latter set off betimes they would not be observed. But the priest-party was quite as matutinal as they were: some of them were already before the door, and it is probable they had been there all night for fear the huguenots should take advantage of the darkness to get the ministers away. Claude Bernard, Ami Perrin, John Goulaz, and Peter Verne—all stanch huguenots—came up; they gave the signal, a door was opened, and they entered the inn. A few moments elapsed during which a number of priests and citizens assembled in that part of the Rue du Rhone which lies between the Tour Perce and the Molard. Presently the inn door

opened again, and the four huguenots came out with Farel and Saunier. When they saw them the crowd became agitated. 'The devils are going,' shouted the priests, as the two evangelists and their friends passed along. Farel, seeing the numbers around him, wished to exhort them, 'as he walked along;' but Perrin would not permit it, representing to him that it was necessary to push on quickly for fear the priests should block the way. When the reformers reached the water's edge, they got into the boat with their defenders. The boatmen immediately began to row, and the crowd that lined the shore could do nothing but hoot. Perrin, fearing violence, would not land at any of the towns or hamlets of Vaud, but steered the boat to an unfrequented place between Morges and Lausanne. Here they all got on shore and embraced each other; after which the huguenots returned to Geneva, and the reformers made their way to Orbe and thence to Grandson.

## CHAPTER IX.

A JOURNEY TO THE VALLEYS OF PIEDMONT, AND STRUGGLES  
NEAR NEUCHATEL.

(END OF 1532.)

FAREL expelled from Geneva, with a heart full of love for those whom he had been obliged to quit, meditated on the means of evangelising them, and like a skilful general, was preparing even during his retreat for a new and more successful struggle. After having saluted the Christians of Orbe and Grandson he departed for the village of Yvonand, on the southern shore of the lake of Neuchatel, where dwelt a youthful Christian Anthony Froment by name, born at Val de Frières in Dauphiny in 1510, and consequently a year younger than Calvin and his countryman Farel. The reformer invited several evangelists to meet him in this village, and about the middle of October there came Olivetan, who had been unable to stay in Geneva after the departure of his two friends; Adam, Martin (probably Martin Gonin the Waldensian), and Guido (who must not be confounded with the Belgian reformer Guido or Guy von Brès) who with Farel, Saunier, Froment, and others formed a little council. Farel gave an account of his mission: he described his journey to the valleys of Piedmont, and the stormy reception he had met with at Geneva. They all looked with interest on the



fugitive missionary who had escaped as by a miracle from the violence of the Genevan priests. Froment in particular could not take his eyes off the reformer; every word of Farel's made a deep impression on him, and disgusted with the ministers of popery, he pitied the fate of the huguenots deprived of God's word by the intrigues of the clergy. Farel, fixing his eyes on him, said: 'Go and try if you can find an entrance into Geneva to preach there.'\* Froment was disturbed and speechless. He possessed learning and talents; but he was young and without experience, and wanted that perseverance and firmness by which other reformers were distinguished. His feelings were sensitive, his imagination was ardent, but his character was uneven and rather fickle. He is believed to have been drawn to the Reformation more by witnessing the excesses of Rome than by the inner charms of the Word of God.

'Alas! father,' he said to Farel, 'how can I face the enemies from whom you were compelled to flee?'—'Begin,' replied Farel, 'as I began at Aigle, where I was a schoolmaster at first and taught little children, so that even the priests gave me liberty to preach. True they soon repented; and even now I seem to hear the curate exclaiming: "I would sooner have lost my hand than introduced this man, for he will ruin all our business." But it was too late; the Word of God had begun its work, and the mass and images fell.' Froment, who was at that time full of ardour and zeal, began to familiarise himself gradually with the idea of going to the city that drove out the

\* Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 10.

prophets. Farel, observing this, persevered, and encouraged his disciple by the recollection of the great dangers they had once incurred together. 'My dear Froment,' he said, 'you fear the men of Geneva; but were you not with me when I planted the Gospel at Bienne, among the mountains, in the valley of Saint Imier, at Tavannes, and near that mountain (Pierre Pertuis) which Julius Cæsar tunnelled? . . . Were you not with me when I went to Neuchatel and preached in the streets and market-place, and in the surrounding villages? Do you not remember that we very often received our rent (*censes*), that is, blows and abuse . . . once in particular at Valengin, where my blood remained for more than four years on the pavement of a little chapel, near which the women and priests bruised my head against the walls, so that we were both of us nearly killed?'

\* These remembrances were not very encouraging. Some sided with Farel, others thought that a man of twenty-two was too young to be launched into such a terrible gulf . . . for Geneva really alarmed them. Froment could not yet make up his mind to attempt the enterprise. Another thought absorbed Farel.

That pious reformer's heart was still full of the glorious synod of the valleys at which it had been decided to translate the Bible. He had several times already entreated Olivetan to undertake that great work: he repeated his entreaties both in the assembly and in private. Near Yvonand there is a number of

\* Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 10, 11. The Choupard MS. (p. 490) mentions Anthony Boive, also from Dauphiny, as Farel's companion. Did both Anthonys accompany the reformer? It is very probable. (See the *Hist. of the Reformation*, vol. iv. book xv. ch. 11.)

hills which form a sort of labyrinth around a little river. Beautiful forests of majestic oaks stretch their branches so wide and high that it is possible to walk beneath their immense leafy arches—a circumstance which has earned for this district the name of Arcadia. Was it in a private room or in these woods that Farel urged Olivetan, as they trampled underfoot the dry leaves which autumn had already loosened from the trees? I cannot tell: in either case he no longer solicited, he ‘importuned;’\* but Olivetan—like Froment with respect to Geneva—repeated his unwillingness to ‘venture’ upon such a task. ‘How,’ said he, ‘can I express Hebrew and Greek eloquence in French, which is but a barbarous language compared with them? You know it is as difficult as to teach the hoarse raven to sing the song of the nightingale.’† Farel tried to encourage him: he might do it. Olivetan’s style is, considering the time, one of remarkable elegance. But Calvin’s cousin alleged other reasons: he had certain fears. ‘Such an undertaking,’ he said, ‘is like a ball in a public building wherein everybody dances as he likes. I shall be encompassed with critics, correctors, and calumniators. . . . They will not be friends, I am very sure, but strangers devoid of charity, Christians who will philosophise about the dot over an *i*, and bring forward a thousand false imputations.’‡—‘St. Jerome undertook a similar work,’ said Farel. ‘St. Jerome!’ exclaimed Olivetan, ‘he had more trouble in answering such people than in all his work. How could I do it—

\* Olivetan’s Bible: *Apologie du traducteur*.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

I who am but a petty page, a mere varlet, compared with such a knight?\*

 But Farel pressed him so much that he thought himself bound to undertake it. He promised, and it was well known that what he promised he would perform.

Farel had won a great victory. The French churches would have a good translation of scripture. But a journey was necessary. 'Cross the Alps,' he said to his friend; 'go to the Waldensian valleys, and come to an understanding with the brethren about the translation.' Then turning towards other members of the synod, he added: 'And you, Adam Martin and Guido, go with him and preach to them the doctrine that will correct all their errors.'

This mission, which was to result in the publication of the Bible in French, was not without importance or without danger. The evangelists proposed to take the direct road by Mount St. Bernard; but before reaching the lake of Geneva they would have to cross a district belonging to the Duke of Savoy. Now the duke, the Count of Challans, and the Sieur de Bellegarde were not at all anxious that the Waldensians of the Piedmontese valleys should unite with the reformers of Switzerland. The four friends determined, therefore, to travel by night. Having supped at Yvonand with Farel and the other brethren, they began their journey immediately after. It was at the end of October. They travelled through the darkness, led by a guide who knew the country well. They successfully accomplished their night journey, and arrived at Vevey the next day before dinner-time.

\* Olivetan's Bible: *Apologie du translateur*.



They began immediately to speak of Christ, for they had no wish to fall into sloth and carelessness.\* From Vevey they proceeded to Aigle, where they found the evangelical Christians of the place assembled to receive them. 'I salute you in Christ,' said Adam, 'and exhort you to reprove one another as becomes brethren and ministers of the word of truth.' †

When they had almost reached the pretty village of Bex, in the midst of its orchards and walnut trees, in front of the picturesque Dent de Morcles, and the huge Dent du Midi, Martin was attacked with severe pains. His companions immediately looked for a house where they could lodge the sick man, but the country was so poor that they could not find a room fit to receive him.‡ These poor brethren were on the highway with their suffering friend, anxious and yet not knowing what to do. Some one told them that about a league behind them, at the village of Ollon, lived the minister Claude who would gladly receive them. They accordingly retraced their steps, and arrived at Ollon, a little place in the midst of the shady woods which extend to the foot of the mountain on which are situated the charming hamlets of Chesières and Villars. They asked for the pastor's house and it was shown them; they dragged their friend to it and knocked at the door. Claude opened it himself, and at the sight of a pale and fainting man invited the

\* 'Ab Yvoniaco a cœna solvimus, et Viviacum venimus pransum, ubi de Christo locuti sumus.'—Adam to Farel from the Valleys, 5 Nov. 1532, Choupard MS. The letter from which we take these particulars has escaped notice until now.

† 'Ut si monerent invicem quemadmodum fratres et verbi veritatis ministros.'—Ibid.

‡ 'Nullum erat cubiculum.'—Ibid.

strangers in. But on a sudden hasty footsteps were heard, a woman appeared flushed with anger and with fiery eyes—a violent, wicked, pitiless, scolding woman: she was the unfortunate pastor's wife. She screamed and gesticulated, and instead of being grave, as Scripture requires such women to be, she forgot all restraint and broke out: 'What's this, a sick man? If you receive him into the house, I will leave it.\*' Claude durst not say a word: the voice of this Xantippe rose higher and higher, and at last she turned her back on her husband and the strangers, and disappeared in a passion.† Poor Claude was sorely vexed and ashamed. 'We will not be the cause of a divorce,' said Adam, 'we will go away.'‡ The pastor, a good but weak man, who could not keep his wife in order, let them go.

Thus not a house was opened to receive an expiring missionary. The poor evangelists were quite disheartened. 'Let us cheer up,' said they, 'and make haste to reach the Alps.'§ The four travellers resumed their journey, Martin probably on horseback; but on arriving at the foot of the mountain beyond Martigny his pains increased. Martin was half dead, Olivetan suffered from an inflammation of the bowels, Guido was exhausted with fatigue, and Adam alone was unaffected. But ere long he too was attacked. Seized with cholera (it is his own word ||) he thought

\* 'Verum uxor garrula et duræ cervicis, pietate vacans, cœpit minari marito de discessu.'—Adam to Farel, Choupard MS.

† 'Furibunda abivit.'—Ibid.

‡ 'Ne divortii causa essemus.'—Choupard MS.

§ 'Properamus ad Alpes.'—Ibid.

|| 'Quo mærore in pede Alpium me colera tam crudeliter invasit.'—Ibid.

his end was come. The four missionaries dragged themselves painfully along the brink of the torrent, whose noisy waters alone disturbed the silence around them. They lifted their eyes mournfully towards those gigantic mountains which it seemed impossible for them to cross, and ineffectually sought a refuge in the poorest of cottages. One thing, however, was left them—the faithfulness of their Master. They said to one another: ‘God takes us down into the abyss when He pleases, but His grace is almighty to lift us out of it again.’\* At this moment they caught sight of a wretched house. They went up to it, explained their condition, and happily they were received in consideration of their money. God, whom they had invoked, alleviated their disorder, and the next day they were able to resume their journey, feebly at starting, but gradually the mountain air gave them strength.

They had been forced to incur extraordinary expenses, and Adam, who held the purse, smiled as he saw its shrunken condition. Their good humour began to return: he showed his friends the lean little bag, and said merrily: ‘Alas! our purse has been seized with such cruel pains in the inside that there is scarcely anything left in it.’† They climbed the mountain, and needing rest entered an inn situated between Martigny and the convent of St. Bernard. They soon observed one of the monks, and approaching him desired in spite of their weakness to discharge

\* *Gratia illius, qui quum videtur nos ducit ad inferos et reducit.*—Choupard MS.

† ‘At crumenæ nostræ linteria cœperunt laborare tam aspere, ut nihil prorsus in illorum corpore remanserit.’—*Ibid.*

their duty: they spoke to him of Jesus Christ, and of the grace he gives to sinners. The monk, who belonged to the Augustine order, listened attentively to their words, and began to talk with them, while the evangelists pressed him closely by means of the Holy Scriptures. He was touched and convinced. 'I will quit Antichrist,' he exclaimed. Adam immediately took paper, sat down and wrote: 'Here is a letter for Master Farel,' he said to the friar, 'go to him, and he will tell you what you have to do.' The evangelist and the monk separated. Even down to our days conversions have been effected among the brethren of this monastery.

At last the four friends arrived among the Waldenses, who listened joyfully to their words of truth and love: some of these Alpine shepherds were even known to have gone two days' journey to hear them.\* These poor Christians handed over to Olivetan towards the printing of the Bible 500 gold crowns—an immense sum for them, and begged that the publication should be hurried on.† Olivetan and the barbes came to terms. Here finishes this episode, which to some may have little interest except so far as it is connected with the history of the French protestant translation of the Holy Scriptures.

When this news reached Farel, his eyes were fixed upon another country. The young and gentle Fabri, whom the reformer loved as a father loves a son, was preaching at Neuchatel, when one day he saw some

\* 'Veniunt a locis distantibus a nobis itinere duorum dierum.'—Choupard MS.

† 'Ad typographum dati sunt quingenti aurei.'—Ibid.



peasants arrive who had been deputed from the village of Bole in the parish of Boudry. These good people entreated him to come and settle among them. The parish priest, a worthy man by the way, looked upon the Gospel not as a proclamation of grace, but as a second law more perfect than the first. Having heard the reformers inveigh against the corruption that prevailed in the church, he had at first gone with them ; but he soon hesitated and shrunk back, when he found that their new morality reposed on a new faith. In fact the ministers who preached in those quarters said that the Gospel substituted a regenerative doctrine for the dead ordinances of the law ; that Christ's religion did not consist in practices commanded by the priests, or even in a purely outward morality, but in a new heart from which proceeds a new life. ' The law,' said Calvin in later years, ' is like grammar, which after it has taught the first elements, refers the learners to theology or some other science, in order that they may be perfected.' The priest of Boudry would have thought himself but too happy to see his parishioners endowed with that external morality which did not satisfy the evangelicals. A zealous doctor of the law, he turned against the doctors of grace, and hence it happened that a few of his parishioners hastened to Neuchatel.

Fabri followed these honest people, and the gentle and moderate reformer was immediately engaged in a severe campaign. The village of Bole was for the reformer ; the little town of Boudry for the priest. There were two places of worship in the parish, the church, and a chapel called the Pontareuse, situated in a low out-of-the-way place. The government decided

that this should be for the use of both parties. Many catholics, more fanatical than their priest, entered into a plot to oppose the worship of the reformed. On the first Sunday in November 1532, the latter went down full of peace and joy into the wild valley through which flows the torrent of the Reuse, and where a few remains of the little chapel are still visible. They entered and took their seats on the benches, while Fabri went up into the pulpit. Meantime the catholics, girding on their swords, which was not usually done, entered the chapel and drew up near the altar.\* While Fabri was preaching, all the bells suddenly rang out together so as to drown his voice, and the more he besought them to let him finish, the louder rang the catholics in the belfry. Then those who were in the church began to move, pushing and shouting. Fabri, seeing this disorder and profanation, ceased speaking, and left the church. He had hardly got outside when the catholics near the altar ran and shut the door, and fell like madmen on the surprised, hesitating, and unarmed congregation.† The confusion was very great, and it was this that saved the innocent. No one distinguished friends from enemies: each man struck the first he met. One or two evangelicals endeavoured to open the door, and at last they succeeded and rushed out, but their position was not bettered. ‘Their adversaries, delighted at being able to distinguish them,’ says an eye-witness,

\* ‘*Gladiis omnes ejusdem factionis præter consuetudinem cincti.*’—Fabri to Farel, Choupard MS. The particulars, which we extract from this letter, were unknown until now.

† ‘*Illi plusquam insani recta irruerunt in nos gladiis evaginati.*’—*Ibid.*

‘fell upon them like wolves upon lambs, threatening them with death.’\* ‘God help us!’ exclaimed the poor people scattered here and there. At last they succeeded in reaching their homes, miraculously as it were, but with many bruises. They were happy at being in peace. ‘Our heavenly Father fought for us mightily,’ they said.† Clubs and swords only served to increase their repugnance for that theocratical tyranny which men had substituted for the mild gospel of Jesus Christ.

The next day some of the reformed went to Neuchatel against the advice of Fabri, who desired to wait for deliverance from the Lord and not from men. To the friends who met them on the road, they told the story of the plot to which they had nearly been victims. All the villages between Boudry and Neuchatel were in commotion, and the peasants of Auvèrner and Colombier flew to arms, ready to join the Neuchatelans if they went to the help of their brethren.‡ The council of Neuchatel decreed that henceforth the chapel of Pontareuse should belong entirely to the reformed.

The catholics resolved to pay no attention to this. On Christmas day the priest had already sung two masses before the hour appointed for the evangelical preaching; and at the moment when the reformers arrived, he resolutely began high mass ‘with loud and long singing,’ although there was scarcely anybody to hear it. The reformed waited patiently, but when the service

\* ‘*Lupina rabie oculos aggrediuntur mortem minantes.*’—Fabri to Farel, Choupard MS.

† ‘*Optimus pater qui pro nobis potenter adeo pugnavit.*’—Ibid.

‡ ‘*Accincti ad arma toto spectarunt die si Neocomenses proficiscerentur.*’—Ibid.

was ended, and just as they were hoping that their turn had come, they were surprised to see the catholics arriving in a crowd. Fabri then wanted to go into the pulpit, but had great difficulty; one pushed him one way, and one another, and all shouted out against him.\* Order being a little restored, one of the reformers went, as was customary, to take a chalice for the celebration of the Lord's Supper. The priest who had remained in the church, watching what was going on, rushed upon him and snatched the vessel from his hands, crying out, 'Sacrilege! Sacrilege!' The friends of the priests determined to put an end to the service once for all. 'Some of them rushed like raging lions upon the reformed, and hit them with their fists; and one of them struck a governor (probably one of the communal councillors) with a knife; but God,' says the document we quote, 'permitted only his clothes to be pierced.' This did not end the battle. Others, going to a room behind the altar, where they had hidden some large sticks, dealt their blows lustily on all sides. The women rushed into the vineyards, tore up the vine-props, and brought them to as many of their husbands as had neither sticks nor knives. Some of them left the chapel and picked up stones to throw at the minister, who was still in the pulpit, and kill him. From every side they fell upon the poor evangelicals, calling them 'Rascally dogs!' Even the *sautier* of Boudry, whose duty it was to preserve order, joined in the riot, threw off his official robe, and loudly hooting, struck harder

\* Requête de MM. les gouverneurs de Bâle à MM. les maitres bourgeois de Neuchatel.—Choupard MS.



than the rest. The parish priest, who loved the law so much, had suddenly lost his balance. Incensed, and beside himself, stripped to his doublet, and 'bare-headed like a brigand,'\* he directed the battle. His friends, well provided with arquebuses, bludgeons, knives, and other weapons, seeing that the evangelists had rallied round their pastor, rushed upon them, intending to kill many of them; 'but it was God's will that this wolf should be stopped on the way,' says the official document, 'and be driven back into his den.' The reformed, who parried the blows as well as they could with their hands only, at last succeeded in reaching their houses. They told their relations and friends what had happened, and gave God thanks. 'It is indeed a great miracle,' they said with emotion, 'that there was nobody killed. But the Lord Jesus Christ is a Good Shepherd; he keeps his sheep so well in the midst of the sword, the fire, the lions, and even death itself, that the wolves cannot snatch them out of his hand.'

While these songs of thanksgiving were being sung in the houses of the evangelists, the curé was triumphing in the church. The battle was scarcely terminated by the retreat of the reformed, when, proud of the victory he had won by stones and clubs, he laid down the stake with which he had armed himself, covered his head, arranged his disordered doublet, put on his sacerdotal robes, and entered the church of Boudry with a grave and composed air. Seeing it full, and wishing to profit by the advantage he had gained, he went into the pulpit and exclaimed in his

\* "Tête nue comme un brigand."—Requête de MM. les gouverneurs de Bâle, &c.—Choupard MS.

burlesque manner: 'Some strangers have come of their own accord into this country. One comes from Paris, another from Lyons, and a third from I do not know where. This one is called Master Anthony, that one Master Berthoud, another Master William, a fourth Master Froment (*i.e. wheat*) with *barley* or *oats* . . . . They carry a book in their hands and boast of having the Holy Ghost. But if they had the Holy Ghost, would they want a book? The apostles who were filled with the Holy Ghost understood without book all languages and all mysteries. My brethren, will you believe a stranger before a man of the country whom you know? Do not associate with those devils; they will lead you into hell; but come to confession as all your forefathers have done; open yourselves to me upon the seven deadly sins, the five natural senses, and the ten commandments. Do not be afraid; your consciences will be cleansed of all evil. Put me to death in case I do not prove all I have told you.\*' The catholics left the church very proud of such a fine discourse.

Some of the friends of the reformed hurried off to Fabri, and reported to him that the priest offered to prove all he had said, particularly that he could absolve from the seven deadly sins and those of the five senses. Without loss of time Fabri appeared before the castellan and councillors of Boudry, and asked for a public disputation, offering to die in case he could not show that all he had preached was true, and that what the priest had said was false. The latter bluntly refused all public discussion; he did not like combats of that kind, and compensated himself in another fashion.

\* Choupard MS.

One day, as he sat half undressed at his window watching the birds as they darted through the air, and the people who were walking in the street, he saw Fabri passing in front of his house. In great excitement he called to him and began abusing him: 'Gaol-bird! forger!' he said, stretching his head out of window; 'tell me why you corrupt Holy Scripture?' Fabri, hoping the curé would grant him the discussion he had so much desired, made answer: 'Come down and bring out your Bible; we will take a clerk who can read it to the people, and I will show you that I am no forger.' At these words the alarmed priest exclaimed: 'I have something else to do besides disputing with a gaol-bird like you;' and he retired hastily from the window. Such were the struggles the reformers had to go through in order to transform the church. This transformation was going on, and ere long the whole principality of Neuchatel was won to the Reformation.

In 1532 it penetrated into the mountain regions among the shepherds and hunters of Locle and Chaux de Fonds. Claude d'Arberg, who had so often followed the chase in these mountains, had built an oratory there to St. Hubert, the hunters' patron saint. The saint (says the legend) was once met by a bear, which killed his horse, but Hubert got on the bear's back, and rode him home to the great astonishment of everybody. A more formidable hunter was now about to tame the bears of these parts. Jean de Bély, the evangelist of Fontaine, having gone to Locle at the time of the fair of St. Magdalen, Madame Guillemette de Vergy had him seized instantly and forced him to dispute for two hours in her presence with the curé, Messire

Besancenet. 'Put him in prison,' said the countess, who was offended at his doctrines; but whilst the high-born dame was so irritated at what she had heard, the priest, a good-natured man, interceded in the kindest manner in favour of the heretic. The lady released him, and the worthy vicar, taking Bély by the arm, led him graciously to the parsonage, and drank wine with him. Already people said that the mountain bears were beginning to be tamed.

From Locle the Gospel made its way to Chaux de Fonds, and thence to Brenets (1534). The earnest mountaineers had taken the images out of the church, desiring to *worship God in spirit and in truth*, and were preparing to break them in pieces and throw them into the Doubs, when they saw two fine oxen approaching, driven by some devout inhabitants from a neighbouring village of Franche Comté. 'We offer you these beasts,' said they, 'in exchange for your pictures and statues.'—'Pray take them,' said the people of Brenets. The Franche-Comtois gathered up the idols, the Neuchatelans drove away the oxen, and 'each thought they had made a fine exchange,' says a chronicler.

With the exception of one village, the evangelical faith was established throughout the whole principality of Neuchatel, without the aid of the prince and the lords, and indeed in spite of them. A hand mightier than theirs was breaking the bonds, removing the obstacles, and emancipating souls. The Reformation triumphed: and after God, it was Farel's work.\*

\* Chambrier, *Hist. de Neuchatel*, p. 229.



## CHAPTER X.

THE SCHOOLMASTER AND CLAUDINE LEVET.

(NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER 1532.)

FAREL, seeing his labours in these different localities crowned with a success that promised to be lasting, turned his eyes with all the more ardour to Geneva. The numerous victories of Neuchatel and Vaud seemed to augur new ones to be gained in the city of the huguenots. There were, however, great obstacles. A fanatical party, directed by monks and priests, was opposed to all change, and even the enlightened catholics, who desired the abolition of crying abuses, kept repeating that the church ought first of all to be maintained, and then reformed. ‘A purification is not enough,’ said Farel; ‘a transformation is wanted.’ But who was to bring it about? He had been banished from Geneva, and for a time could not return there.

Froment, young, poor, simple-minded, but intelligent, had refused to undertake so difficult a task. Farel tried once more. Froment did not understand how the attack of one of the strongest fortresses of the enemy could be entrusted to so young a man. ‘Fear nothing,’ said Farel; ‘you will find men in Geneva quite ready to receive you, and your very obscurity will protect you. God will be your guide,

and will guard your holy enterprise.’\* Froment yielded, but felt humbled; and reflecting on the task entrusted to him, he fell on his knees: ‘O God,’ he said, ‘I trust in no human power, but place myself entirely in thy hands. To thee I commit my cause, praying thee to guide it, for it is thine.’† He did not pray alone. The little flock at Yvonand, affected at this call which was about to take away their pastor, said: ‘O God, give him grace to be useful for the advancement of thy Word!’ The brethren embraced, and Froment departed, ‘going to Geneva,’ he tells us, ‘with prayers and blessings.’ It was the 1st November 1532.

He reached Lausanne, whence he took his way along the shore of the lake towards Geneva. The poor young man stopped sometimes on the road, and asked himself whether the enterprise he was about to attempt was not sheer madness. ‘No,’ he said, ‘I will not shrink back; for it is by the small and weak things of this world that God designs to confound the great.’ And then he resumed his journey.

The Genevese were much occupied at that time with signs in the heaven. A strange blaze shone in the firmament; every night their eyes were fixed upon a long train of light, and the most learned endeavoured to divine the prognostics to be drawn from it. ‘At the new moon,’ says a manuscript, ‘there appeared a comet, at two in the morning, which was visible from the 26th September to the 14th of the following month.

\* ‘Obscuritatem nominis præsidio futuram, Deum itineri ducem et cepto patronum.’—Spanheim, *Geneva restituta*, p. 47.

† Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 12.

About this time Anthony Froment arrived in Geneva.\* Many huguenots, irritated at the reception given to Farel, despaired of seeing Geneva reformed, and its liberties settled on a firm basis. Some, however, who were adepts in astronomy, wondered whether that marvellous sheen did not foretel that a divine light would also illuminate the country. They waited, and Froment appeared.

The young Dauphinese was at first much embarrassed. He tried to enter into conversation with one and another, but they were very short with the stranger. He hoped to find 'some acquaintance with whom he could retire safely and familiarly;' but he saw none but strange faces. 'Alas!' he said, 'I cannot tell what to do, except it be to return, for I find no door to preach the Gospel.†' Then, calling to mind the names of the chief huguenots, friends of Farel, who (as he said) would give him the warmest welcome, Froment resolved to apply to them, and waited upon Baudichon de la Maison-Neuve, Claude Bernard, J. Goulaz, Vandel, and Ami Perrin, . . . but strange to say he everywhere met with embarrassed manners and long faces. The mean appearance of the young Dauphinese disconcerted even the best disposed. Farel (they thought) might at least have sent a scholar, and not a working man. Geneva was an important and learned city. There were men of capacity among the Roman clergy, who must be opposed by a minister of good appearance, a well-established doctor. . . The huguenots bowed out the mean little man. 'Ah!' said

\* Badollet MS. in Berne library, *Hist. Helv.*

† Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 13.

Froment, returning to his inn, 'I found them so cold, so timid, and so startled at what had been done to Farel and his companions, that they dared not unbosom themselves, and still less receive me into their houses.' Confounded and dejected at seeing all his plans overthrown, he walked thoughtfully through the streets with his eyes bent on the ground. He entered the inn, shut himself up in his room, and asked himself what was to be done next. Those who seemed to wish to hear the Gospel looked at him with contemptuous eyes. If he spoke to any persons, they turned their backs on him. Not one door was opened to the Word of God. . . His feelings were soured. Wearied and dejected he sank under the weight, and lost courage. 'I am greatly tempted to go back,' he said.\*

Froment went to the landlord, paid his bill, strapped his little bundle on his shoulders, and, without taking leave of the huguenots, bent his steps towards the Swiss gate, and quitted the city. But he had not gone many yards before he stopped; he felt as if he were detained by an invisible hand; a voice was heard in his conscience, telling him he was doing wrong; a force greater than that of man compelled him to retrace his steps. He returned to his room, shut the door, and sat down; leaning on the table with his head in his hands, he asked what God wanted with him.† He began to pray, and seemed to witness in himself the realisation of the promise: *I will lead thee in the way in which thou shouldst walk.* He called to mind what

\* Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 13.

† 'Cum jam pedem ex urbe efferret, nescio qua vi humana majore, se vel reluctantem revocari sensit.'—Spanheim, *Geneva rest.* p. 47; Froment, *Gestes*, p. 13.



Farel had told him, and what the reformer had done at Aigle. A flash of light illumined his soul. They will have nothing to do with him in Geneva, because his appearance is mean. Be it so; he will undertake with humility the work that God gives him; and since he is rejected as an evangelist, he will turn school-master.

During his walks Froment had met with one Le Patu, a man but little known, whom he asked if he could procure for him a place for a school. Le Patu answered that there was the great hall at Boytet's, at the Croix d'Or, near the Molard.\* They went there together; Froment measured its dimensions with his eye, and hired the room. He breathed again; he had now one foot in the stirrup; it only remained to get into the saddle, and begin his course. It was necessary to find scholars; with God's help Froment despaired of nothing. Returning to the inn, he drew up a prospectus, made several copies in his best handwriting, went out with them, and posted them in all the public places. They ran as follows: 'A man has just arrived in this city who engages to teach reading and writing in French, in one month, to all who will come to him, young and old, men and women, even such as have never been to school; and if they cannot read and write within the said month, he asks nothing for his trouble. He will be found at Boytet's large room, near the Molard, at the sign of the Croix d'Or. Many diseases are also cured gratis.'

These papers having been posted about the city, many of the passers by stopped to read them. 'We

\* The sign of the Golden Cross is still on the house, but it was not an inn, as some assert.

have heard him speak,' said some with whom he had conversed; 'he talks well.' Others thought that the promise to teach reading and writing in a month was suspicious; to which more benevolent men replied, that in any case he did not aim at their purses. But the priests and devout were irritated. 'He is a devil,' said a priest in the crowd; 'he enchants all who go near him. You have hardly heard him before his magical words bewilder you.'\*

The school opened, however, and he did not want for young pupils. Froment, who had talent (his book of the *Actes et Gestes de Genève* proves this), taught with simplicity and clearness. Before dismissing his scholars he would open the New Testament and read a few verses, explaining them in an interesting manner; after which (as he had some knowledge of medicine) he would ask them whether any in their families were sick, and distribute harmless remedies among them. It was by the instruction of the mind and the healing of the body that the evangelist paved the way to the conversion of the heart. The school and medicine are great missionary auxiliaries. The children ran home and told their parents all; the mothers stopped in their work to listen to them, and the fathers, especially the huguenots, made them tell it again. Some of the boys and girls were continually prattling about it; they even 'accosted men and women in the streets, inviting them to come and hear *that man*.'† In a short time the city was full of the schoolmaster who spoke French so well.

\* Froment, *Gestes*, p. 14.

† Ibid.

Several adults resolved to hear him, either from a desire to learn, or from curiosity, or in sport. Wives, however, stopped their husbands; jesters played off their jokes, and priests uttered their anathemas. But nothing could stop the current, for people thought the schoolmaster would speak against the lives of the priests, the mass, and Lent. . . . These worthy huguenots, as they passed through the streets, heard 'numerous loud jests and whispered hints' around them.\* They took their places behind the children and listened. Froment began: 'He speaks well,' said his hearers. He did even more than he had promised; he taught arithmetic, which was very acceptable to the Genevese, who are by nature rather calculating. It was the sermon, however, which the hearers waited for, and that was very different from what they had expected—a homily instead of a philippic. In the course of his lessons Froment read at one time a story from the Bible, at another one of our Lord's sermons, giving the Scripture as the Scriptures of God, explaining as he went on the difficult words, and then applying the doctrine affectionately to the consciences of his hearers. They were all ears; leaning forward and with half-opened mouth, each one seemed afraid of losing a word. A few boys turned glances of triumph on those whom they had brought there. Froment joyfully marked the effect produced by his teaching. 'They were much astonished, for they had never heard such doctrine.'† Some began to understand that evangelical Christianity did not consist in mocking the priests and the mass, but in knowing and loving the Saviour.

\* Froment, *Gestes*, p. 14.

† Ibid.

‘Those who heard him conceived in their hearts some understanding of the truth.’\*

In a short time the success of this simple instruction surpassed the hopes of the teacher. Those who had heard him talked of the beautiful discourses delivered at the Croix d’Or. ‘Come,’ said they, ‘for he preaches very differently from the priests, and asks nothing for his trouble.’—‘Good,’ said some citizens more ignorant than the rest; ‘we will go and hear him; we will learn to read and write, and hear what he says.’† Men, women, and children hastened to the hall, striving which should be there first.‡ The poor man whom the Genevans had repulsed had suddenly grown in their estimation. The disputes between huguenots and mamelukes, the claims of the Duke of Savoy and Bishop De la Baume were forgotten; nothing was thought of but the evangelist. At the epoch of the Reformation nothing was more striking than the great difference between the instruction given by the priests and that given by the reformers. ‘Their teaching,’ it was said, ‘is not such a cold, meagre, lifeless thing as that of popery. True, our masters sing loud enough, and preach whatever pleases their patrons, but they chirp out divine things in a profane manner; their discourses have no reverence for God, and are full of fine words and affectation. . . . In the others, on the contrary, instead of mere words and idle talk, there is virtue and efficaciousness, a life-giving spirit and divine power.’§

\* Froment, *Gestes*, p. 14.

† ‘Nous verrons ce que c’est qu’il dit.’—Froment, *Gestes*, p. 14.

‡ ‘A viris et fœminis certatim ad Fromentium itum.’—Spanheim, *Geneva restit.* p. 48.

§ Calvin, *passim*.



The friends of the priests could not hear such remarks without feeling the deepest alarm. 'Pshaw!' they said, 'you speak as if the man had enchanted you. By what sounds, figures, or magical operations has he bewitched you? Or is it else by fine words, great promises, or other means of seduction . . . . . by money?' From that time if they saw in the street a man or woman who attended the meetings at the Croix d'Or, they would cry out: 'Ho! ho! there goes one of the possessed!'<sup>\*</sup> Complaints were made and bitter reproaches: signs of disapprobation were heard; but 'notwithstanding all this contrary movement the number of hearers increased daily. Many of those whom curiosity had attracted were interested, enlightened, and touched, and returning home they praised and glorified God.'<sup>†</sup>

All were not, however, won over to the Gospel. Certain huguenot leaders, Ami Perrin, John Goulaz, Stephen d'Adda, and others, took no great pleasure in the preacher's sermons; but believing that this new doctrine, which fell from the skies, would overthrow the dominion of the priests and mamelukes, they did not hesitate to range themselves among Froment's hearers, and to support him energetically in the city.<sup>‡</sup> Ere long matters went still worse for Rome. Some of Froment's hearers invited certain priests who were liberally inclined, to come and hear the schoolmaster. The idea of sitting on the benches at the Croix d'Or alarmed these churchmen, the huguenots repeated

<sup>\*</sup> Badollet MS. in Berne library, *Hist. Helv.*

<sup>†</sup> Froment, *Gestes*, pp. 14-15.

<sup>‡</sup> Council Registers, 31 Dec. 1532.

the Frenchman's words: 'Truly,' said the priests, 'these doctrines are good, and we should do well to receive them.'—'Ho! ho!' said certain of the citizens, 'the clerks who made such a brag are now converted themselves.'

The alarm increased. The most bigoted monks and priests entered private houses, addressed the groups assembled in the public places, and jeered at Froment's doctrine and person. 'Will you go and hear that devil?' they said; 'what can that little fool (*folaton*) know who is hardly twenty-two?'—'That fool,' answered Froment's admirers, 'will teach you to be wise . . . . That devil will cast out the devil that is in you.'\*

In truth an astonishing work was going on in Geneva at this time; many souls were gained to the evangelical faith, and as in the times of the apostles, it was the women of distinction who believed first.† Paula, the wife of John Levet, and probably the same as Pernetta of Bourdigny, was daughter of the lord of Bourdigny, in the *mandement* of Peney. The members of this house had been styled nobles or *damoiseaux* as far back as the thirteenth century, and many of them had been syndics of Geneva.‡ This lady, prepared by the teachings of the evangelists who had preceded Froment, 'had become very zealous for the Word,' and earnestly desired to bring to the Gospel her sister-in-law Claudine,

\* Froment, *Gestes*, p. 13.

† 'And some of them consorted with Paul and Silas, and of the chief women not a few.'—Acts xvii. 4.

‡ Galiffé, *Notices Généalogiques*, I. p. 446.

wife of a worthy citizen, Aimé Levet. The latter, 'an honest, devoted, and wondrously superstitious woman,' was upright and sincere, and more than once had combatted zealously her sister's opinions. One day when Paula was at Claudine's house, she conjured her to come and hear the schoolmaster. 'I have so great a horror of him,' replied her sister-in-law, 'that for fear of being bewitched, I will neither see nor hear him.'—'He speaks like an angel,' answered Paula. 'I look upon him as a devil,' retorted Claudine. 'If you hear him, you will be saved.'—'And I think I shall be damned.' Thus contended these two women. Paula was not discouraged. 'At least hear him once,' she said, and then added with emotion: 'Pray hear him once for love of me!' She prevailed at last, though with great difficulty.

Dame Claudine, although yielding to her sister's entreaties, resolved to protect herself thoroughly. She armed herself carefully with all the antidotes provided in such cases; she fastened fresh-gathered rosemary leaves to her temples, rubbed her bosom with virgin wax,\* hung relics, crosses, and rosaries round her neck, and shielded by these amulets, she accompanied Paula to the Croix d'Or. 'I am going to see an enchanter,' she said, so deceived† was she. She promised herself to lead back the Demoiselle de Bourdigny into the fold.

Claudine entered the hall and sat down in front of the magician in mockery and derision, says the chro-

\* 'Recente verbena tempora vincta, cera virginea pectus munita.'—Spanheim, *Geneva restit.* p. 50.

\* 'Embabuynée,' Froment, *Gestes*, p. 16.

nicle. Froment appeared, having a book in his hand. He mounted on a round table, as was his custom, in order to be better heard, and opening the New Testament, read a few words, and then began to apply them. Claudine, without caring the least for the assembly, and wishing to make her catholicism known, crossed herself several times on the breast, at the same time repeating certain prayers. Froment continued his discourse and unfolded the treasures of the Gospel. Claudine raised her eyes at last, astonished at what she heard, and looked at the minister. She listened, and ere long there was not a more attentive hearer in all the congregation. Froment's voice alone would have been 'wasted,' but it entered into the woman's understanding, as if borne by the Spirit of God. She drank in the reformer's words; and yet a keen struggle was going on within her. Can this doctrine be true, seeing that the church says nothing about it? she asked herself. Her eyes often fell on the schoolmaster's book. It was not a missal or a breviary . . . . It seemed to her full of life.

Froment having completed his sermon, the children and adults rose and prepared to go out. Claudine remained in her place: she looked at the teacher, and at last exclaimed aloud: 'Is it true what you say?'—'Yes,' answered the reformer. 'Is it all proved by the Gospel?'—'Yes.'—'Is not the mass mentioned in it?'—'No!'—'And is the book from which you preached a genuine New Testament?'—'Yes.' Madame Levet eagerly desired to have it: taking courage, she said: 'Then lend it me.' Froment gave it to her, and Claudine placing it carefully under her cloak, among her relics and beads, went out with her sister-in-law,



who was beginning to see all her wishes accomplished. As Claudine returned home she did not talk much with Paula: hers was one of those deep natures that speak little with man but much with God. Entering her house, she went straight to her room and shut herself in, taking nothing but the book with her, and being determined not to come out again until she had found the solution of the grand problem with which her conscience was occupied. On which side is truth? At Rome or at Wittemberg? Having made arrangements that they should not wait meals for her, or knock at her door, 'she remained apart,' says Froment, 'for three days and three nights without eating or drinking, but with prayers, fasting, and supplication.' The book lay open on the table before her. She read it constantly, and falling on her knees, asked for the divine light to be shed abroad in her heart. Claudine probably did not possess an understanding of the highest range, but she had a tender conscience. With her the first duty was to submit to God, the first want to resemble Him, the first desire to find everlasting happiness in Him. She did not reach Christ through the understanding; conscience was the path that led her to Him. An awakening conscience is the first symptom of conversion and consequently of reformation. Sometimes Claudine heard in her heart a voice pressing her to come to Jesus; then her superstitious ideas would suddenly return, and she rejected the Lord's invitation. But she soon discovered that the practices to which she had abandoned herself were dried-up wells where there had never been any water. Determined to go astray no longer, she desired to go straight to Christ. It was then she

redoubled those 'prayers and supplications' of which Froment speaks, and read the Holy Scriptures with eagerness. At last she understood that divine Word which spake: 'Daughter, thy sins are forgiven thee.' Oh, wonderful, she is saved! This salvation did not puff her up: she discovered that 'the grace of God trickled slowly into her;' but the least drop coming from the Holy Spirit seemed a well that never dried. Three days were thus spent: for the same space of time Paul remained in prayer at Damascus.\*

Madame Levet having read the Gospel again and again desired to see the man who had first led her to know it. She sent for him. Froment crossed the Rhone, for she lived at the foot of the bridge, on the side of St. Gervais. He entered, and when she saw him Claudine rose in emotion, approached him, and being unable to speak burst into tears. 'Her tears,' says the evangelist, 'fell on the floor,' she had no other language. When she recovered, Madame Levet courteously begged Froment to sit down, and told him how God had opened to her the door of heaven. At the same time she showed herself determined to profess without fear before men the faith that caused her happiness. 'Ah!' she said, 'can I ever thank God sufficiently for having enlightened me?' Froment had come to strengthen this lady and he was himself strengthened. He was in great admiration at 'hearing her speak as she did.†' A conversion so spiritual and so serious must needs have a great signification for the Reforma-

\* Froment, *Gestes*, p. 16; Gautier MS.

† Froment, *Gestes*, p. 16.

tion of Geneva, and as Calvin says in other circumstances where also only one woman seems to have been converted: ‘From this tiny shoot an excellent church was to spring.’\*

\* Calvin on Lydia, Acts xvi. 14.

## CHAPTER XI.

FORMATION OF THE CHURCH. FRIENDS AND OPPONENTS.

(MIDDLE TO THE END OF DEC. 1532.)

WHILE the Gospel was thus manifesting its power in Geneva, the bishop persisted in his inflexible hostility. The Genevan magistrates still felt great regard for him. On the 13th December 1532 the council sent a deputation to him to obtain his consent to a tax which was deemed to be necessary: the Sieur de Chapeaurouge, the ex-captain-general Philippe, and others appeared respectfully before him. Love of order and the obedience due to established authority were characteristics of the Genevese statesmen, and vexed as they were at the abuses which had their source in the power of the bishop, they could not take upon themselves to do anything without his consent. The bishop, flattered with these attentions, made the deputation very welcome for a couple of days, but on the third all his bad humour returned. When the ambassadors appeared before him again he said hastily: 'I will grant you nothing, not a single crown, and I will compel my lords of Geneva to ask my pardon on their bended knees.' On the 26th December the deputation reported this language to the council, who were annoyed at it; and while the bishop was sending these messages to Geneva which



did not advance the cause of popery, the Reformation, on the contrary, was endeavouring in every way to enlighten men's minds and win their hearts.\*

Froment being in communication with Farel and the reformed of Switzerland, received from them Testaments, tracts, and controversial works, which his friends and he distributed all over the city, where they were read with eagerness. Every day more persons were won over to the evangelical faith. They were of all conditions of life. A certain tradesman, named Guérin, a cap-maker, listened while working in his shop to all that was said around him, and thought seriously of religion and of the abuses of popery. One day he determined to visit the Croix d'Or, and the words he heard there touched his heart and enlightened his mind. Being sensible, intelligent, modest, and of decided character, he gave himself up with all his heart to God's cause, and ere long became Froment's helper. There were also persons of all ages among the converts. Claude Bernard had a daughter between seven and eight years old whom he early introduced to the knowledge of scripture. The child's precocious understanding was struck with certain simple and clear passages which condemned the popular superstitions; and the little controversialist (we are told) confounded the ignorant priests. Unable to answer her they spread a report that she was possessed of the devil. A Frenchman of distinction, passing through Geneva, wished to see her, and was charmed with her infantile graces and piety.

It was soon apparent that there was something

\* Council Registers, 13 and 26 Dec.; Gautier MS.

more than a new doctrine : a moral reformation accompanied the revival of faith. In the days of her bigoted catholicism Claudine Levet had been very fond of dress ; her conscience now reproached her with having been unreasonable in her love of costly attire, and more eager to ornament her body than to adorn her soul. One day she shut herself up in that room where she had heard the call of God, stripped off (says Froment) ‘all superfluous bravery (*braveté*), laid aside those ornaments and trappings which had only served to show her off in a vainglorious way, as a peacock spreads his tail,’ and from that time she wore a plain and becoming dress. Having sold her beautiful robes and other belongings, she gave the money to the poor, particularly to the evangelicals of France, who having been banished from their homes on account of truth had come to Geneva. All her life she loved to receive refugees in her house. ‘Verily,’ they said of her, ‘verily, she follows the example of Tabitha who was called Dorcas (Acts ix.), and deserves to be kept in perpetual remembrance.’

Claudine did more than this : she spoke frankly and meekly of the precious truth she had received, and ‘scattered it wherever she happened to be in the city.’ The priests alarmed at such an astonishing transformation endeavoured to bring her back to the practices of the church ; but Claudine ‘showed them tenderly by scripture what was necessary’ (namely, faith and charity). All in the city were surprised to hear her talk as she did.\*

The news of her conversion made a great sensation,

\* Froment, *Gestes*, p. 18.

particularly among the Genevese ladies. One day, when the most worldly of them had met together, they talked of nothing but Madame Levet and her estrangement from the mass and from amusements. They were Pernette Balthasarde, wife of a councillor; the wife of Baudichon de la Maison neuve; the wife of Claude Pastor, Jeanne Marie de Fernex, and many other rich and honourable ladies.\* ‘Alas!’ they said, ‘how is it that she has changed in so short a time?’ They had loved her, and all the more regretted that she was *lost*. . . They vented their anger on Froment. ‘She has heard that creature,’ they said, ‘and been bewitched by him.’ These ladies resolved that they would see her no more.†

Claudine did not despair of her friends. She continued to live for God, and all might see that a holy life, full of good works, proceeded from her faith. The Genevan ladies, although unwilling to visit her, watched her; and observing ‘that she persevered in well-doing, and was still a constant pattern of holy living,’ they drew near her. They were curious to know the cause of this singular change, and began to speak to her when they met her, some even going to see her. Claudine received them affectionately, spoke to them about that which filled her heart—this was what her friends desired—presented them with the New Testament, and begged them to read it and to love the Saviour. Several of these ladies were converted, especially those whom we have named. Claudine, who was their ‘exemplar of life and charity,’ pressed them to adopt a Christian conduct. ‘Put

\* Froment, *Gestes*, p. 18.

† Froment, *Gestes*, p. 17.

aside your great display,' she said to them, 'attire yourselves simply and without superfluity, and give your minds to great charities. Faith holds the first place, but after that come good works.' From that time indeed these women showed great compassion for the wretched. The fame of their good deeds spread abroad, and the Gospel was honoured by them. It seemed admitted that no one could be a Christian *unless he had some poor persecuted foreigner in his house*.<sup>\*</sup> Such was the Christianity of Geneva at the moment when it was beginning to appear, and such it remained for two centuries.

Aimé Levet, who was at first strongly opposed to Froment and the Gospel, gradually softened down. The holiness and charity of his wife made him appreciate the Word of God: 'thus Claudine won her husband to the Lord.'<sup>†</sup> From that time she had more liberty, and the meetings at the Croix d'Or being insufficient, little assemblies were held at her house or at others. When there was no evangelist present capable of explaining the Bible, they begged this pious christian woman to do it, saying: 'No one has received from the Lord greater gifts than you.' Claudine would then read the scripture, and set forth with simplicity the truths and graces she had found therein. The reformers remembered the precept of St. Paul, *Let your women keep silence in the churches*; but they added, 'This must be understood of the ordinary charge, for a case may happen when it will be necessary for a woman to

<sup>\*</sup> Froment, *Gestes*, pp. 16-18; Roset, *Chron.* liv. x. ch. ii.

<sup>†</sup> Froment, *Gestes*, p. 17.



speak in public.\* Ere long the modest Guérin, who studied his Bible day and night, and other Christians likewise, took an active part in the work of evangelisation.

The church was forming. At first there were a few souls awakened separately here and there in Geneva; now with the element of individuality, which is the first, was combined the element of communion, which is not less necessary, for Christianity is a leaven that *leaveneth the whole lump*. Those who had begun to believe assembled to advance together in faith. Doubtless it was not yet a church in its complete state, with all its institutions. Believers, even without forming a church, may act upon one another, pray in common, and celebrate the Lord's Supper together; things ordinarily begin in this way. This state of transition, the lawfulness of which must be acknowledged, proves that the ecclesiastical organisation, with its ministers, elders, deacons, presbyteries, and synods, has not the first place in Christianity, and that the pre-eminence belongs to faith and christian sanctification. This imperfect mode of existence is insufficient: it has many deficiencies, and is exposed to many dangers. The church should be formed. Somewhat later, under Calvin, it attained indeed its complete form in Geneva. It would be foolish to deny man the right of being at first a child; but it would be no less so to refuse him the right and duty of becoming a man.

Just at this time the evangelicals received an unexpected help. A Franciscan coming from abroad

\* Calvin, 1 Cor. xiv. 34.

began to preach the Advent sermons in the Rive church, and this monk, Christopher Bocquet by name, happened to have some inclination for the Gospel. Being invited to preach in a city where two parties were at war, he abstained from both superstitions and abuse—frequent themes with many catholic preachers—but at the same time he abstained from certain distinctive doctrines of the Reformation which he did not quite understand, and keeping to a certain common ground of Christianity, he delivered ‘moderate’ sermons.\* Dressed in his brown frock, and with the cord round his waist, and humbly bending his head, he entered the Cordeliers’ church, went up into the pulpit, and contemplating the mixed crowd before him, proclaimed to all a Saviour who had come not in magnificent array, but in gracious love, and called upon every heart to rejoice at his sight. The evangelicals were edified, and the number of persons frequenting the church increased every day. But Friar Christopher ‘had hardly finished his sermon,’ when the huguenots hurried away to Froment’s meeting-place, where *the trumpet gave no uncertain sound*. They were not the only persons who went thither. Many catholics having heard the reformers say that the monk and the schoolmaster preached fundamentally the same things, followed the crowd going to the Croix d’Or, and some of them took a liking for what they heard.

Thus the people were more and more enlightened. The evangelicals met sometimes at one house, some.

\* ‘Moderatas ad populum conciones habebat.’—Spanheim, *Geneva restit.* p. 48.

times at another; they read and discussed the little tracts that were sent them, but above all applied themselves to Holy Scripture. It was there only that these simple Christians were willing to seek the light which their consciences needed. 'Let us specially study the sacred writings,' they said, 'in order that we may distinguish in religion what comes from God, from that which men have added to it.'\* The Genevans retired from these meetings strengthened and full of joy, and their love for the Word of God continued to increase.

If the Reformation met with faithful adherents in Geneva, it also encountered resolute adversaries. The astonished and bewildered priests seemed to sleep. Contenting themselves with a war of trifles, they made no active and combined opposition to the evangelical movement. It was the laity who uttered the cry of alarm. Angry at the inactivity of the clergy, they gave the signal of a 'holy war' destined in their opinion to expel the infidels from their well-beloved Zion. Thomas Moine† was at their head—a decided, impetuous man, a fluent speaker, and one who had attained great consideration in the Romish party; he complained that they had permitted the enemy to establish himself little by little in the ancient episcopal city. He said that it was time to wake up, and reproached the Genevese ecclesiastics for their cowardice. Moine did not speak in vain.

The vicar of La Madeleine touched by his words,

\* MS. erroneously ascribed to Bouivard in Berne library, *Hist. Helv.* V. 12.

† He signed his name *Mohennos*, which was pronounced *Moine*—the spelling of the public registers.

determined to exalt the honour of his church and corporation, and gave notice that he would preach against the heretical schoolmaster and the foreign preacher. The large area was soon filled with fervent catholics, among whom were some of the reformed, in particular Chautemps, Claude Bernard, Salomon, and Perrin. The vicar praised the catholic apostolic Roman Church, extolled its head, who was (he said) the representative of God, and defended its worship and institutions. Then having praised the fold, he described the 'wolves' that prowled around it to devour the sheep. He accused Froment of ignorance and falsehood, and conjured his hearers not to throw themselves into the paws of wild beasts, thieves, and robbers. . . .

On leaving the church the four huguenots who had heard him met to inquire what was to be done. These men who at the first moment had, like the others, given so bad a reception to the schoolmaster, had been touched (three of them at least) by the simple preaching of the Gospel. The Bible, as we have seen, had become their court of appeal, which grieved the priests, who dared not deny the divinity of the book, but as they had never studied it, were much embarrassed to find the proof of their dogmas in it. After some deliberation Chautemps and his friends waited upon the vicar. 'Froment,' they said, 'is a good and learned man; you say that he has lied; prove it by Scripture?' The vicar having consented, the huguenots demanded that the discussion should take place in public, so that all might profit by it; but the priest desired it to be held at the parsonage. The champions of the Reformation gave way, and arrangements were made for the



disputation to take place on the last day of the year. The poor priest (Claude Pelliez by name) was greatly embarrassed: he retired to his room, took up the Vulgate, which he did not often open, and began to look for passages to oppose to the reformed doctrines; but he searched in vain, he could find none.

In the afternoon of the 31st December, St. Sylvester's day, Chautemps, Bernard, Perrin, and Salomon went to the parsonage of the Madeleine, wearing their swords as was customary. Some priests whom the curate had invited were already there, but they had to wait for the champion of Romanism who had not yet been able to find a single text. The four huguenots took off their belts, threw their swords on the bed, and sitting round the table with the priests, began to talk familiarly together. At last the vicar, who had had some trouble to tear himself away from his folios, in which he still hoped to find something, appeared with a bulky volume under his arm. The huguenots rose as he entered; beneath the table at which they were sitting stood some wine-bottles which they and the priests had emptied while waiting for him, and which Perrin had paid for. The conference now began. The vicar opened his big volume, in which some strips of paper indicated the places he thought favourable to him, and read a long extract opposed to Froment's doctrine. 'What book is that,' asked Perrin; 'it is not a Bible.' The huguenots added, 'You have not been able to find in the Bible one word with which to answer Froment;' and laughed at him. 'What is that you say,' retorted the priest, reddening with anger; 'it is the *Postillæ perpetuæ in Biblia* of the illustrious Nicholas Lyra!'—'But you

promised to refute Froment out of Scripture,'—'Lyra,' said the priest, 'is the most approved interpreter.' The huguenots were determined not to accept the commentaries of man as if they were the very Word of God. The Bible incorruptible and infallible, before which all human systems must fall, was the only authority. 'Lyra is not a good doctor,' said Perrin. —'Yes!'—'No!'—'Yes!'—'You do not keep your word.' Perrin had understanding rather than real piety: he was a lamp, but it had no oil. Haughty, violent, and headstrong, he wanted everything to bend before him, and so did the vicar. The quarrel grew hot, and instead of discussing they abused each other. Then one of the churchmen having left the room stealthily, a band of priests suddenly entered with one De la Roche at their head, who carried a naked sword which he pointed in front of him. 'What!' said Claude Bernard, 'we came in good faith, we four only, to your house to discuss; we have drunk with your friends, we have thrown our swords on the bed . . . and you traitorously send for an armed band of priests. It is a trap.' With these words the four citizens grasped their swords, made a way through their opponents, got out into the street, and held their ground, ready to defend themselves. One of the priests ran to the belfry of the Madeleine and began to ring the tocsin.\* Thus ended the first theological dispute at Geneva.

It was about noon—a time favourable for a riot. On hearing the church bell the city was thrown into commotion, and everybody hurried to the spot. It

\* La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 49.

was said that the huguenots desired to get possession of the building so that the schoolmaster might preach in it. Priests came forward with their adherents to defend the sanctuary; huguenots took up arms to protect their brethren hemmed in in front of the church. 'Alas!' said the friends of peace, 'the priests are ringing the tocsin, and thus exciting the citizens to kill one another.' The four huguenots, with drawn swords and their backs to the wall, prepared to give the churchmen a warm reception; while their friends, as they arrived, drew up by their side. The tumult was general. 'Let us close in to the church,' said the priests, who wished to surround it to prevent the evangelicals from entering. Huguenots and catholics hastened from every quarter to the Madeleine. Terror seized the most timid. The poor ladies of St. Claire, who were at dinner, hearing the noise, rose from the table in alarm, and exclaiming, 'Alas! they have threatened to marry us . . . they are going to put their abominable plot into execution,' made a procession round their church and garden with great devotion and many tears.\*

Just at this time the council broke up, and two of the syndics, Ramel and Savoie, who were going home, had to pass through the midst of the riot. The two parties were on the point of coming to blows. The syndics advanced, checked the combatants by interposing their official staves, and ordered them to lay down their arms, which was done. 'There was neither violence nor bloodshed.'†

\* La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 49.

† Council Registers, *ad diem*.

But all was not ended. Some members of the chapter and several priests, hearing that a fight was going on at the Madeleine, had collected in the Rue des Chanoines, where William Canal, incumbent of St. Germain's, harangued them. The catholic faith is threatened, the throne of the pope is shaken, the great honour due to Mary is endangered. . . . We must fall upon those who impugn it, and free the city from their persons and their errors. Such was the sum of his discourse.

The tumult being quieted round the church,\* the lieutenant of justice (Châteauneuf) had turned towards the Rue des Chanoines, where he had been told that the priests were in commotion. Finding them determined to follow Canal sword in hand to the Madeleine, he commanded them to stop. The priest of St. Germain's, unwilling to submit to the orders of a civil magistrate, rushed hastily towards the church. Châteauneuf laid his hand upon him, when the rebellious parson turned round and levelled his arquebuse at that officer; but a friendly arm prevented his firing. Canal ran off, and the other priests dispersed.†

The council reassembled in the evening. Each opinion was represented in that body, which halted between two opinions. After a riot like that which had just occurred, it was necessary to take certain precautions, especially as the morrow was New Year's day, and at such times men's minds are more easily excited. The council summoned the principal friends of the reform,

\* 'Ab invasione per eos cœpta.'—Council Registers of 31 Dec. 1532.

† Roset, *Chron.* liv. ii. ch. iv.



and Froment also was invited, although the Registers make no mention of his presence. 'We exhort you,' said the syndics, 'to make Anthony Froment cease from disputing and preaching, as well as the others who teach in private houses; and we conjure you to live as your fathers did.' No one would make any promise; on the contrary, the reformed withdrew, saying, 'We will hear the Word of God wherever we can: nobody has a right to hide it.' Then turning to Froment, they begged him not to be silent under such prohibition.\* 'We are constrained,' they said, 'to hear the schoolmaster and his friends, because the decree of the council ordering the Word of God to be preached in every parish has not been observed.' The reformed, while desiring before all things to obey God, put themselves in the right: they appealed to lawful ordinances, and this was the ground which they intended keeping.

The council, acknowledging that this position of the evangelicals was impregnable, sent for the Abbot of Bonmont, the vicar-episcopal, and begged him to detain at Geneva the cordelier who had preached the Advent so well, and to press the Dominicans also to provide a preacher calculated to edify their congregation. They required further that there should be true preachers of the Word of God in every parish. The vicar-episcopal, being a peaceful man, promised everything, even to punishing Canal the priest.

The tumult was appeased, but great agitation still reigned in men's minds. Some saw that the storm was over, others that it might easily break out again.

\* Berne MS. ascribed to Bonivard.

As it was St. Sylvester's eve, there were numerous meetings throughout the city, catholics and huguenots being equally excited, and both waiting anxiously for the morrow.\*

\* Council Registers. Roset, *Chron.* liv. ii. ch. iv.

## CHAPTER XII.

## THE SERMON AT THE MOLARD.

(NEW YEAR'S DAY, 1533.)

FOR nearly twenty years liberty had been clearing the ground on which the Gospel was to raise its temple. For nearly eight years a few pious voices had spoken of the doctrine of salvation in private conversations and meetings; but the Reformation had not yet been preached in the face of the people. The hour that was to make it a public and notorious thing was about to strike; the world was about to witness the birth of the principles of that moral power which for two centuries, whatever may have been the meanness of its origin, has influenced the destinies of christendom; which, fanning the flame, that is to say, inspiring the friends of the Reformation with heavenly courage, has waged heroic battles against the Jesuits and the inquisition, and preserved the Gospel and liberty from dangerous assaults. Geneva was about to hear the voice of a protestant.

The last night of the year 1532 had passed away, and first of 1533 was beginning. In every house relations and friends were greeting the new year, which the reformed hoped would be better than all that had gone before. The family congratulations being over, they went to church. Bocquet was again

preaching at the Gray Friar's monastery, where many evangelicals attended ; but the monk had hardly finished, when numbers of his hearers quitted the chapel and hurried eagerly along the Rue de Rive to the Croix d'Or. There were many curious persons among them, who, knowing that the council had prohibited Froment's preaching, were all the more desirous of hearing him. In a moment the hall was filled, then the stairs and passage . . . and at last the street in front of the house. Froment arrived with a few friends, and seeing the crowd, observed : ' The streets are so full, that it is quite a crush.' He tried however to make his way through the mass, and his friends assisted him ; but do what he would, all his exertions were ineffectual.

Was all this unforeseen, or was it premeditated by some of the huguenots? Were these energetic men determined at last to bring the evangelist from his narrow schoolroom and force him to preach in public? Is there not some truth in Sister Jeanne's statement that, on the evening before, they had desired to make him preach in the large area of the Madeleine? And may we not believe, that as they did not succeed then, they now desired to compensate themselves by taking a still larger space and making the reformer preach in the open air? These suppositions appear probable, but there is no decided evidence in their favour. At all events, the crowd recognized Froment, and saw that he could not reach the usual place of his ministrations. Those who were in the street perceived that if the evangelist succeeded in entering the Croix d'Or, they would be left outside, which was not agreeable to them. One man shouted out : ' To the Molard,' and



in a short time the cry became general: 'To the Molard, to the Molard.'\*

The Molard was situated in the most populous quarter of the city, near the lake and the Rhone. It was a large square, about 200 yards from the Croix d'Or. Froment hesitated, but the crowd, getting into motion, carried him along with them towards the south-west corner of the square, where the fish market is still held. The fishwomen were there with their fresh wares displayed on their stalls. The huguenots, finding no other pulpit, took one of these stalls, and invited Froment to get on it. He was determined, like his master Farel, to preach the truth in every place.

As soon as his head appeared above the others, the multitude that filled the square manifested their delight, and those around him shouted louder than ever: 'Preach to us, preach the Word of God to us.' Froment, who was moved, answered with a loud voice: 'It is also the word that shall endure for ever.' The tumult was so great that the preacher could not make himself heard: 'He made a sign to them with his hand to keep silence, and they were still.'† 'Pray to God with me,' he said, and then getting off the stall, he knelt upon the ground. He was agitated: the tears flowed down his cheeks;‡ a deep silence prevailed in that square which was so often in those days the scene of tumultuous movements. Some knelt, others remained standing; all heads were uncovered; and even those who were strangers to the Gospel,

\* Froment, *Gestes*, p. 22.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

appeared thoughtful. Froment joined his hands, lifted his eyes to heaven, and speaking so distinctly that all could hear him, he said :\*

‘ Eternal God, father of all mercies, thou hast promised thy children to give them whatsoever they shall ask in faith, and wilt refuse them nothing that is reasonable and just ; and hast always heard the prayers of thy servants, who are oppressed in divers manners. Thou knowest now what is the need of this people better than they or I do. . . This need is principally to hear thy Word. It is true we have been ungrateful in not acknowledging thee as our only Father, and thine own son Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent to die for us, in order to be our only Saviour and intercessor. But, Lord, thou hast promised us that whensoever the poor sinner draws near thee, by reason of thy Son, born of the Virgin Mary, thou wilt hear him. We know and even are assured that thou desirest not the death and destruction of sinners, but that they should be converted and live. . . . Thou desirest that they should not remain under the great tyranny of Antichrist, and under the hand of the devil and his servants, who are continually fighting against thy holy Word and destroying thy work. . . . Our Father ! look down upon thy poor blind people, led by the blind, so that they both fall into the ditch, and can only be lifted out by thy mercy. . . . Lift them out by thy Holy Spirit, open their eyes, their ears, their understandings, their hearts, in order that, confessing their sins, they may look to the goodness of thy Son whom thou

\* These particulars, this prayer, and the first sermon that followed it have been recorded by Froment himself in his *Gestes de Genève* published by M. Revillod, pp. 22-42.

hast given to die for them. And since it hath pleased thee, Lord, to send me to them, give both them and me the infinite grace that by thy Holy Spirit they may receive what thou shalt put into the mouth of thy servant, who is unworthy to be the bearer of so great a message. But as it hath pleased thee to choose me from among the weak things of the world, give me strength and wisdom so that thy power may be manifested. . . not only in this city but in all the world. How can thy servant stand in the presence of such a multitude of adversaries, unless thou art pleased to strengthen him? Show, then, that thy power is greater than Satan's, and that thy strength is not like man's strength.' Froment concluded with the Lord's prayer.

The people were touched: they had often heard the mechanical prayers of the priests, but not a prayer of the heart. They acknowledged that the reformers were certainly not partisans, but Christians who desired the salvation of all men. The evangelist rose and stood once more upon the stall, which was about to become the first pulpit of the Reformation in Geneva. He had heard of the proceedings of the vicars of the Madeleine and St. Germain's, and was moved by the furious opposition of the priests to the preaching of the Gospel. He had their swords and arquebuses still before his eyes, and resolved to oppose them with the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. It was necessary to lead the Genevans away from the teachers who deceived them and direct them to Scripture; it was necessary to break with the papacy. All eyes were fixed on him: they saw him take a book—it was the Gospel. He

opened it at the seventh chapter of Matthew and read these words: *Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves: by their fruits ye shall know them.* Then fixing his eyes on his numerous audience, Froment began by expressing his faith in the mysteries of God: 'Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, very God and very Man, conceived of the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary, knowing the things that were to happen, foresaw that false prophets would come, not with hideous faces, but with the most pleasing exterior in the world, under the colour of holiness, and in *sheep's clothing*, so that the children of God might be deceived. For this cause he exhorted his disciples to be *wise as serpents and harmless as doves*. Our God does not desire to have a foolish, giddy people, but a people endowed with great wisdom, who can distinguish between the doctrine of God and the doctrine of man. They who do not know it go astray, and are like swine which cannot discern good things from bad, and swallow everything indiscriminately. . . . Ah! if the serpent, which is but a brute, is so wise in his generation, if he shuts his ears so as not to hear the voice of the charmer, if he casts off his old skin when the time for doing so has come, shall we not fear to follow the cunningly-devised doctrines of men? Shall we not cast off our old skin to put on a new one? Yes, we must put off our old nature which is sin, Satan, idolatry, impurity, robbery, hypocrisy, pride, avarice, and false doctrine, and put on the new man, which is Christ. . . . It would be of no use to hear the Word of the Gospel if we did not change our wicked intentions, and to dis-



tinguish the false teachers if we did not avoid them. What! if we recognized venomous beasts should we live among them? If we saw a dish of poison should we not beware of eating it?

‘But Christ desires us further to be *harmless as doves*. Not with the simplicity of monastic hypocrisy or bigotry, but with simplicity of heart, without gall, lovely as that of doves. . . . If we walk in such simplicity we shall overcome all our enemies, as Jesus Christ overcame his enemies by his meekness. . . . Let us not begin fighting, killing, and burning as tyrants do. The child of God has no other sword of defence than the Word of God; but that is a two-edged sword, piercing even to the marrow.’

Everybody understood Froment’s allusion, and many, as they thought of the riot of the evening before, looked and smiled at each other. But while these words, delivered with energy, were stirring the crowd assembled in the Molard, there was still greater agitation in the rest of the city. The priests were irritated; they had tried to shut Froment’s school-room, and now he was preaching in the great square. They went from one to another and excited the laity. ‘The Lutherans,’ they said, ‘have taken their *idol* to the Molard to make him preach there.’ The vicar-episcopal being instructed by them, apprised the syndics, who sent for the chief usher (*grand sautier*) Falquet, and ordered him to stop the preaching. That officer immediately went down to the Molard, the sergeants cleared a way through the crowd, and going up to Froment, who was then speaking with great boldness, he stretched out his staff towards him

and said, 'In the name of my lords I command you to cease preaching.'

Froment stopped, and turning to the chief usher answered him in a loud voice, '*We ought to obey God rather than man.* God commands me to preach His word, you forbid it; I am therefore not bound to obey you.' The presence of the public force caused, however, some little sensation in the audience. The evangelist noticing it turned to the people and said, 'Do not be disturbed, my friends, but listen to what our Lord says—that we must beware of false prophets.' Silence was restored, everyone became calm, and Falquet, finding the evangelist was determined to preach, thought it the safest plan to refer to his masters, and withdrew with his officers. Froment then continued his discourse: 'In order to be on our guard against false prophets, we must know what they are, what is their doctrine and life, and with what they are clothed. When they have been described to you in their natural colours, you will avoid their teaching and their life as more deadly than the plague. The plagues with which God has visited you heretofore\* only touched you outwardly; but this, more venomous than all the other poisons of the earth, infects the soul, kills it, and casts it into perdition. With this plague we and our fathers have been infected for nearly a thousand years. Not that it came upon us suddenly, and in villanous and deformed appearance; no, it came gradually, under the colour of holiness and in sheep's clothing, these ravening wolves having even

\* The plague was then pretty frequent at Geneva.

some good intentions. But although Jesus Christ had warned us of their coming, and had pointed them out to us, we have been blinded and led by the nose to the ditch of deceit like cattle to water. . . . The son of perdition, who sitting in the temple of God is worshipped as God—him you worship and keep his commandments. Oh! what a fine master you serve, and what prophets you have! Do you know them? Not to keep you in suspense I declare openly that I am speaking of the pope, and that the false prophets of whom I bid you beware are the priests, monks, and all the rest of his train.

‘But some of you, who yourselves belong to that band, will say: “It is you that are the false prophets! Our law is old, and yours is but of yesterday, and brings confusion among the people of every country. While our friends reigned, we enjoyed so much good, so many happy years, that it was quite marvellous; but since you have come to preach this new law there have been wars, famines, pestilences, divisions, strifes, and ill-will. Certainly you are not from God.”

‘Well, let us examine this statement; let us find out who are these false prophets—we or your priests? . . . In order to discriminate in such a matter the two parties ought to have a competent judge, who is no acceptor of persons, and that the parties should not be judges in their own cause. For if, in civil causes, we need good judges, good pleadings, good witnesses, good reasons, and letters patent, how much more so in the things of God! . . . We shall take, therefore, a competent judge, and shall produce witnesses, documents, and ancient customs for the defence of our right.’

Curiosity was excited; the hearers asked each other

what was the judge's name. Hitherto the pope had been appealed to as sole judge of controversies : who was Froment going to put in his place?

‘In the first place,’ he continued, ‘the judge shall be—God. Yes, God who judges with righteous judgment, not regarding either rich or poor, wise or foolish, and who gives right to whom it belongs;—the judge shall be His true Son Jesus Christ, attended by His good and lawful witnesses the prophets and apostles; and here,’ said he, holding up the New Testament, and showing it to the people, ‘here are the sealed letters, signed with the precious blood of our Lord, and the cloud of martyrs who were put to death in order to bear this testimony. What read we there?’

‘Firstly, the Lord condemns the Pharisees as *blind leaders*. Now, do you not think that yours (the Romish priests) are condemned by him? . . . Those who call themselves saints through their own merits, the only saints of the church, and who wish to lead you by their bulls, pardons, auricular confessions, masses, and other tricks or manœuvres which they have invented out of their own heads . . . which the Pharisees never dared do.

‘Moreover, the Lord in St. Matthew bears this testimony: There shall arise false prophets in the latter days who will say unto you, *Lo, here is Christ or there!*\* Do they not tell you that Christ is there . . . in the inner part of the holy house, hidden in the farthest place, *in a vessel*? Do not believe them. The true Christ is he who hath ransomed us with his blood. Seek him by a real faith at the right hand of the

\* Matth. xxiv. 23.



Father, and not in a house, in a cupboard, in the pyx . . . as your new redeemers and high-priests do.

‘And what says Jesus Christ to-day for the fuller identification of the false prophets? He not only says that they come in sheep’s clothing, but that *they walk in long robes, devour widows’ houses, and for a show make long prayers.*\* The Lord does not forbid wearing long robes for the necessities of the body, but the hypocritical superstitions connected with them, the wearers esteeming themselves holier than the laity, by being dressed, shaven, and shorn differently from us. . . Yes, by such means they have devoured widows; I do not mean to say that they eat women; it is a manner of speaking, as we say of tyrants that they devour their people, and of lawyers that they devour their clients, that is to say, their substance; and not that they eat men’s flesh, as the cannibals do. *They break their bones* (to get at the marrow), says a prophet, *and eat the flesh of my people, as flesh within the caldron.*†

‘Look now, O people, I pray you, and judge for yourselves. Tell us who are those who wear such clothing, such *long robes*, who *devour widows*, making long prayers for show. . . . You know very well it is not us, for we are dressed like other people; but if your priests were to dress like us they would be apostate and excommunicate.

‘Nay more, we do not lead poor people to understand that they ought to bring us a portion of their goods, and that then we will save them; that praying

\* Matth. xxiii. 14; Mark xii. 38; Luke xx. 46.

† Micah iii. 3.

for them and the dead, we will bring them out of purgatory. . . . But your priests do so, and under such pretexts they have dragged into their paws almost all the riches of the earth; and not a word must be said about it . . . for whosoever speaks of it will suddenly be put to death, or be excommunicated, or called heretic and Lutheran.

‘Ah! Jesus Christ, St. Paul, and the other apostles paint them so truly to the life that there is no one so blind or stupid as not to recognise them easily, except those who are afraid of losing their soup-tickets. The Holy Scriptures call them wells without water, anti-christs, despisers of the Lord, and say that they *give heed to doctrines of devils, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats which God hath created to be received with thankfulness of them which believe.*’\*

While Froment was thus haranguing the people in the Molard, the magistrates assembled in the hotel-de-ville learnt from the chief usher that the sermon was still going on. The syndics were exasperated. The canons and priests argued that as the civil power was helpless, they ought to take the matter into their own hands, and, grasping their arms, prepared to descend. At the same time, the council being resolved to make an example, ordered the preachers to be apprehended wherever they were found; and consequently the lieutenant of police, the procurator-fiscal, with sergeants, soldiers, and priests, marched in a large body to the Molard, angry and indignant at the evangelist’s boldness, and determined to throw him into prison.

\* 1 Timothy iv. 1-3.

If Farel had been placed beyond their reach, Froment at least should not escape. While this excited band was descending the Perron with deadly intentions, Froment, who either had no suspicion, or did not care about it, was continuing his discourse to the people of Geneva.

‘There are many other passages of scripture,’ he said, ‘which might be brought forward for a stronger proof; but these must suffice to put you in a position to judge whether we or your pastors are false prophets. There is none among you who does not know that we do not forbid marriage or meats; that we declare marriage holy, ordained from the beginning of the world to all such as have not the gift of continence, without any distinction of persons. But the pope does otherwise, and says that he who hath not a lawful wife may keep a concubine (*Distinctio xxxiv. cap. xvi. Qui non habet uxorem, loco illius concubinam habere potest*); for, he adds, I desire that they be holy. . . Verily a wonderful holiness is that! . . . I make you all judges. You have long known them better than I have.

‘As for meats, we leave every man free, as our Lord has done, exhorting the people to use them profitably, without excess or superfluity, giving thanks to God. . But these do the very opposite. Although Christ was sent by the Father to teach us the truth, they bring us lies, dreams, false doctrines, prohibitions of marriage and of meats, and all sorts of nonsense, as if they were holy things.’ . . .

At this moment a confused noise was heard. Claude Bernard, whose eyes and ears were on the watch, perceived a band of armed men entering the square. The lieutenant of the city, the procurator-fiscal, the

soldiers and the armed priests, exasperated and impatient, were occupying the Molard. Bernard saw that resistance would be dangerous and useless; besides the Reformation must not be established in Geneva by violence, it must make its way by conviction. There was not a moment to be lost; every one knew what would be the fate of the evangelist if he were taken . . . He must be saved. Bernard therefore sprang from his place and rushed 'in great excitement' towards Froment, shouting to him at the top of his voice: \* 'Here are all the priests in arms . . . the procurator-fiscal and the lieutenant of the city are with them . . . For the honour of God descend, get off the stall, and let us save your life! . . Make your escape!' Froment would not come down: they entreated him in vain; his heart burnt within him, for he perceived that his discourse was stirring their souls . . . How could he forsake his work at such a decisive moment? But the priests and arquebusiers were coming nearer; some of the huguenots were already grasping their swords and preparing to resist the sacerdotal gang. There would have been bloodshed and death. 'Pray, for God's honour, let us avoid the spilling of blood,' exclaimed Bernard. Froment could not resist these words. Some of his friends caught hold of him, lifted him off the stall and dragged him away. They took him through a narrow private passage, and by this means reached Jean Chautemps' house. The door opened and the evangelist was put into a secret hiding-place. The

\* 'Anhelo pulmone, in effusissimam vocem laxato.'—Spanheim, *Geneva restit.* p. 52.



priests and soldiers vainly endeavoured to reach him; the mass of hearers was between them and him. The lieutenant ordered the people ‘under heavy penalties’ to retire; and when the preacher was in safety, the assembly dispersed. The magistrates and priests returned angry and disappointed to report this second failure to the syndics. The Word had not been sown in vain; many of the hearers found that they had received a glorious new year’s gift. Such was the first day of the year 1533 at Geneva.

All the priests and their followers had not returned to the hotel de ville. Froment had disappeared, but he could not be far off. Some of them prowled about the adjacent streets, trying to discover the reformer’s hiding place. At last one of them found it out. Chautemps was known to be a decided evangelist, and they called to mind that Olivetan had lived in his house. Several catholics stationed themselves under his windows, and when the night came, they began to make an uproar. This alarmed Froment’s friends; and going to his hiding place they told him that ‘he must move to the house of another citizen.’ They went out by a back-door, and, owing to the darkness, he was conducted without being recognised to the house of the energetic Perrin, who was more dreaded than the honest Chautemps. Ere long, however, the priests and their adherents followed him there: ‘Ami Perrin,’ they shouted, ‘we will pull down your house and burn you in it if you do not send the Lutheran away.’ Perrin made use of stratagem: going out to the riotous catholics, he said: ‘We have liberty to keep an honest servant in our houses without impediment from anybody.’ He then said to Froment: ‘You are

my servant, I engage you as such, and you shall work for me.' At the same time a few of Perrin's friends, stanch huguenots, came up the street, presenting such a threatening front to the priests, that they were forced to retire. The syndics determined to convoke the great council on the morrow.\*

The circumstances were serious: the new doctrine had been preached publicly, and Froment's bold address had made an impression, especially on the huguenots. They had discovered that the surest means of guaranteeing their political emancipation was to establish a religious reformation. At the Molard, liberty and the Gospel had shaken hands. The catholics asked whether the pope's sovereignty was about to fall to the ground. The various parties grew warm, abused each other, and lively discussions took place between them. The politicians maintained that if the city was divided on such all-important matters, their irreconcilable enemy Savoy would plant his white cross on the walls he had coveted so long. Certain laymen, full of confidence in their own ability, doubted whether strangers and madmen (*follateurs*) should be permitted to vent their nonsense everywhere? . . . The priests spoke the loudest: they asked the Genevans if they would forsake the faith of their ancestors; if the catholic and apostolic religion, attacked, overthrown, and annihilated, was to give place to a new doctrine that would bring down the ruin of Geneva. The huguenots replied that if the religion announced by the reformers was not that of the pope, the schoolmen,

\* Froment, *Gestes*, pp. 43, 44. La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Iocain*, &c. p. 50.

the councils, and perhaps even of the Fathers, it was at least that of the apostles and Jesus Christ, and consequently was older than that of Rome. They represented that as the papal government was nothing else than despotism in the church, it could produce nothing but despotism in the state. The two parties became more distinct every day. The syndics and councillors, wishing to restore concord, went from one to another, trying to calm down the more violent; but it was a very hard task.

On the 2nd of January, when the council of Two Hundred met, the premier syndic proposed, 'that it should be forbidden to preach in private houses or in public places without the permission of the syndics or the vicar-episcopal,—and that all who knew of preachers guilty of infringing this law should be bound to inform against them, under penalty of *three stripes with the rope*.' At these words the huguenots exclaimed, 'We demand the Holy Scriptures;' to which the friends of the priests replied, 'We desire that sect to be utterly extirpated.' The council thought to restore harmony between everybody by carrying a resolution that Bocquet the gray friar should preach until next Lent.

The premier syndic, who was distressed at the strife and hatred by which the citizens were divided, proposed that 'all men, citizens, and inhabitants, should forgive one another.' The Genevans, who were prompt to anger, were equally prompt to reconciliation. 'Yes, yes,' they exclaimed, as they lifted up their hands, 'We

\* Council Registers, 2 Jan. 1533; Gautier MS. Roset MS. *Chron.* liv. ii. ch. v. La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Hérésie de Genève*, p. 50.

desire to love those who are of a contrary opinion.' And soon bands of men might be seen parading the streets, in which persons of the most opposite opinions held one another affectionately by the arm.\*

Meantime Froment remained in Perrin's house and wove ribbons, 'otherwise he could not have stayed there,' as he informs us. Whilst seated in silence at the loom, passing the shuttle to and fro, he deliberated whether he should remain in hiding or again openly proclaim the Gospel? Having made up his mind to go from house to house to strengthen those who had believed, he went out and knocked at certain doors; a few of his friends, armed with stout sticks, followed him at a distance, without his knowledge, to prevent his being insulted. One day, however, a vulgar woman abusing him roundly, Jean Favre, a violent huguenot, and his body-guard, went up and gave her 'a sound slap on the face.' Froment turned round, distressed at his friend's hastiness: 'It is not by violence,' said he, 'that we shall gain friends, but by gentleness and friendship.'

Another time Froment was crossing the Rhone bridge to go to Aimé Levet's.† It was a holiday, and the priests at the head of a procession were advancing on one end of the bridge as Froment arrived at the other. They were carrying crosses and relics, mumbling prayers and invoking the saints: *Sancte Petre*, chanted some; *Sancte Paule*, chanted others. Froment, being taken by surprise and embarrassed, determined

\* Council Registers, 2 Jan. 1533; Gautier MS. Roset MS. *Chron.* liv. ii. ch. v. La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Hérésie de Genève*, p. 50.

† 'In Leveti ædes, in ponte quo flumen Rhodani transitur sitas, migrat.'—Spanheim, *Geneva restit.* p. 50.



to be moderate, and not to throw the saints into the river as Farel had done at Montbeliard. He therefore stood still, but did not bow to the images. When they saw this, the priests left off chanting and began to shout: 'Fall on him! . . fall on the dog! . . to the Rhone with him!' The devout women who followed them, breaking their ranks, rushed upon the reformer; one caught him by the arm, another by the dress, while a third pushed him from behind: 'To the Rhone' with him they cried, and endeavoured to throw him into the river. But his body-guard, consisting of John Humbert and some other huguenots, who were a little way off, ran up and rescued Froment from the hands of these furies. Upon this the women, priests, and sacristans, seeing that the Lutherans had saved their *idol*, shouted still louder than before. A tumultuous crowd filled the bridge. The huguenots, wishing to put Froment in a place of safety, hurriedly thrust him into Levet's house, which was situated at the corner of the bridge.\* The populace, excited by the clergy, instantly besieged the house: they flung stones at the windows, threw mud into the shop, and at last rushed in and scattered the drugs and bottles upon the floor. Levet was an apothecary—a profession much esteemed. The huguenots, having put Froment in safety in a secret chamber, went out and assisted by a few friends drove the priests, women, and rioters from the bridge.

At night Froment left his hiding-place and returned to Perrin's, where he assembled a few friends and told them that he thought it was his duty to leave the city

\* Froment, *Gestes*, p. 4.

on account of these 'raging tempests.' Chautemps, Perrin, Levet, and Guerin were much distressed, but they confessed that the violence of his enemies rendered the evangelist's longer stay in Geneva useless. Claude Magnin offered to accompany him, and when the night came Froment bade his brethren farewell. Proceeding cautiously, he quitted the city, crossed the Pays de Vaud, and arrived at the village of Yvonand, where he rested from his Genevese battles.

Froment was not one of those eminent men who play a part because of their great character, and whose influence is continually on the increase. His ministry at Geneva during part of the winter 1532-33 was the heroic period of his life, after which he seldom appears but in the second or third rank: he was eclipsed by teachers who were superior to him. In the briefness of his ministry he resembles those heavenly bodies which attract all eyes for a few weeks, and then disappear; but he resembles them also by the influence which the people ascribe to their ephemeral passage. Froment's stay in Geneva shook the Romish traditions, secured the Holy Scriptures from oblivion, began to shed a few rays of light in the city, and laid the first foundations of the Church. Ere long the Word of God was carried thither in greater fulness by Farel and Calvin: the sun poured out all its light, and a solid majestic edifice was built on the foundations laid by the poor schoolmaster.

## CHAPTER XIII.

HOLY SCRIPTURE AND THE LORD'S SUPPER AT GENEVA.

(JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 1533.)

FROMENT'S departure did but increase the love of the Gospel in serious minds. Deprived of what they considered their right—hearing the Gospel preached—they suffered from the want, and were determined to free themselves from the spiritual destitution to which they were reduced by the clerical system. Others felt no less decided aspirations for liberty, and were unwittingly the instruments of a greater revolution than they had imagined. These Genevans felt, as if by inspiration, that at the beginning of the sixteenth century society was passing through a crisis, and that a new phase was opening for mankind. They did more than observe it: they were personally the chief actors in the revolution that was about to be accomplished in the world. Leaving the barren nations in their lifeless stagnation, the men of this little city shouted ‘Forward!’ and rushed into the arena.

Froment had hardly left Geneva before the partisans of the reformation raised their heads. The Romish Church had on its side the bishop-prince, the clergy, the Friburgers, and even the majority of the council and people; but if the friends of reform were in a

minority as regards material force, they surpassed their adversaries in moral strength. The historian asserts that from this moment the two parties were nearly equal in power.\* The grey friar Bocquet, who 'had managed with so much address,' says a manuscript, 'that both parties went to hear him with equal eagerness,'† now began to preach the christian truth more openly. The astonished priests were still more exasperated against the monk than they had been against the reformer, and solicited that he should be silenced.

The hands of the clergy were ere long strengthened by a powerful ally. On February 23, six Friburg councillors, stanch catholics, entered Geneva, the bearers of a threatening letter. 'If you wish to become Lutherans,' said they to the council, 'Friburg renounces your alliance.' The syndics answered to no purpose that they desired to live as their forefathers had done: the Friburgers made a great disturbance about the grey friar's sermons, and the council decided, 'for the love of peace,' that Bocquet should leave Geneva.

The friends of the Gospel, seeing that even the Franciscan was taken from them, did not lose heart. The Holy Scriptures remained: they read in their homes Lefèvre's New Testament, and formed meetings at which the Word of God was explained. The assemblies 'which took place in the houses here and there were multiplied,' and the number of believers increased every day.‡ They met ordinarily at the end of the Rue des Allemands, at the house of Baudi-

\* Ruchat, iii. p. 186.

† Berne MS., ascribed to Bonivard, *Hist. helv.* v. 12.

‡ Froment, *Gestes*, p. 47. — 'Domatim conventus habere.'—Turretini MS.



chon de la Maisonneuve, who henceforward became a most zealous protestant. Sprung from a noble and powerful family in the republic, he had a decided character and some talent, and carried to extremes his convictions and his desire to make them succeed. Individual life had prevailed during the feudal times; in the sixteenth century the social element was growing stronger every day. There were, however, certain natures which still maintained their independent individualism, and Baudichon was one of them. Accordingly, so long as it was only a question of destroying the old order of things, he acquitted himself valiantly; but he was less useful, when it was necessary to build up the new order. He seems, however, to have been aware of his own insufficiency. His arms were a house (*maison*), and above the crest an open hand with these words: *Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it.*

The Lord did build: assemblies were formed, and Baudichon's house became the *catacombs* (says an old author) in which the new Christians held their humble meetings.\* They arrived, saluted each other fraternally, sat down in a large room, and remained a few moments in silence. They knew that though they were many, they had all one sole Mediator, present in the midst of them although unseen. Then one of them would read a portion of Scripture, another of the better informed explained and applied it, and a third prayed. . . . The believers departed edified from their meetings, 'which were so different (they said) from the pope's mass.'

\* 'In Domonovani Baudichonii ædibus, quæ concionum ordinariorum *crypta* erant.'—Spanheim, *Geneva restit.* p. 58.

Sometimes a great treat was granted them. Some evangelical foreigner passed through Geneva; the news spread immediately to every family; the place and time were named when he would preach, and the believers flocked thither from every quarter. 'What is his name?' they asked one day. 'Peter Maneri.' 'What is he?' 'A minister.' 'Where is he staying?' 'At Claude Pasta's.' And Claude Pasta's rooms were filled immediately.

These first evangelicals of Geneva were not content merely with being taught sound doctrine; they knew that a cold knowledge of God can save no man, and that it is necessary to live with the Spirit of Christ, and as He lived. They had formed a fund among themselves, and Salomon was the treasurer. Every one brought his mite for the relief of the poor, whether Genevans or foreigners. Thus these christians learnt at once to believe, to love, and to give.

Two kinds of protestantism were already beginning, however, to appear in Geneva, which have not ceased and perhaps never will cease to exist—an external and an internal protestantism. The pious and humble Guerin had a servant who, full of admiration for his master's sermons, was also a great talker. One day, wishing to do the same as his master, he began to preach in the open street before a number of people. 'Why do you go to mass?' he said: 'you are idolaters. . . Instead of worshipping God, you adore a wafer!' The poor orator was taken up and compelled to leave the city in consequence of his sermon. Another day some huguenots entered a pastrycook's shop: it was a Saturday in Lent. They asked for a plate of meat. 'Impossible,' said the

master. 'Not so much ceremony,' rudely returned the huguenots. The pastrycook ran off to inform against them, and they were condemned to pay a fine of sixty sous each, which occasioned some disturbance. 'Lutherans, huguenots, heretics!' shouted one party; 'Pharisees, mamelukes, papists!' answered the other.\*

In the midst of these disturbances the most important work of the reformation was progressing at Geneva. The pious Olivetan was labouring night and day at the translation of the Bible. He believed that nothing was more necessary for the Church of his time, and in his great love for it, he determined to do all in his power to supply the want. 'O poor little Church,' he said, 'although thou art desolate, mis-shapen, and rejected, and countest for the most part in thy family the blind, the lame, the maimed, the deaf, the paralytic, orphans and strangers, simple and foolish . . . why should we be ashamed to make thee such a royal present? Do we not all need the consolation of Christ? For whom does the Lord destine his Scripture, if not for his little invincible band, to whom, as the real leader of the war, he desires to impart courage and boldness by his presence?' †

Nothing disturbed Olivetan so much as the sight of the Church of his day. The more he studied it, the more he was grieved by its misery and convinced of the necessity of a total reformation, accomplished by the Word of God. Never perhaps had its condition

\* Council Registers, 4th and 26th March. Froment, *Gestes*, p. 47.

† Olivetan's Bible, *Dedication*.

caused so profound and keen a sorrow in any one. When he was alone in his room and seated at his table, these bitter recollections would recur to him: 'I love thee,' he exclaimed; 'I have seen thee in the service of thy hard masters; I have seen thee coming and going, worried and plagued; I have seen thee ill-treated, ill-dressed, ill-used, ragged, muddy, torn, dishevelled, chilled, bruised, beaten, and disfigured. . . . I have seen thee in such piteous case, that men would sooner take thee for a poor slave than the daughter of the universal Ruler, and the beloved of his only Son. Listen,' added he, 'thy friend calls thee; he endeavours to teach thee thy rights and to give thee the watch-word, that thou mayest attain to perfect freedom. . . . Stupified and bewildered by so many blows, bowed down by so many cares brought upon thee by thy rough masters, wilt thou persevere? wilt thou go thy ways and complete the foul and grievous task with which they have burdened thee?'

But Olivetan soon stopped in the midst of his work and asked himself whether 'the humble translator' (as he calls himself) was capable of performing such a task. He looked upon himself as the meanest of believers, 'as one of the smallest toes on the lowly feet of the body of the Church.'† But his very humility induced him to increase in diligence. He procured the best copies of the Scriptures and compared, as he tells us, 'all the translations, ancient and modern, from the Greek down to the Italian and German.' Above all, he made great use of the French

\* Olivetan's Bible, *Dedication*.

† 'Comme l'un des plus petits orteils des humbles pieds du corps de l'église.'—Olivetan's Bible, *Apologie du translateur*.



translation by Lefèvre of Etaples, but rendered certain passages differently. He studied the various texts, the use of the Masoretic points, marks, consonants, aspirates, and unusual expressions. He deliberated whether he should preserve in French certain Greek terms, such as *apostle* and *bishop*, or express them by the corresponding word in French. 'If I preserve the Greek word,' he said, 'the thing which it signifies will remain unknown, just as it has been to the present day.' He therefore translated the Greek word *apostle* by the French word *envoyé* (sent); instead of *bishop* he wrote *surveillant* (overseer); and *ancien* (elder) instead of *priest*. Then he added mischievously: 'And if any one is surprised at not finding certain words in my translation which the common people have continually on their lips, imagining they are in Scripture, such as *pope*, *cardinal*, *archbishop*, *archdeacon*, *abbot*, *prior*, *monk*, he must know that I did not find them there, and for that reason I have not changed them.' \*

On the 13th March the printer De Vingle asked permission to print the Bible in French. The council was much divided, for the friends of the clergy opposed his prayer. On the one side they called out *Scripture*! and on the other *Church*! The syndics thought it their duty to steer a middle course, and granted permission to reprint Lefèvre's Bible without adding or retrenching a word. They were afraid of Olivetan's translation, and we shall see by and by where he was forced to get it printed. †

\* Olivetan's Bible, *Apologie du translateur*.

† Council Registers, Bellard, 1533.

Another desire absorbed the evangelicals of Geneva about this time. When Guerin, Levet, Chautemps, and others met together in some humble room, they expressed the happiness they should feel at assembling round the Lord's table to commemorate his death. They had long ceased to take part in the communion of the Romish Church, defiled as they thought it by wretched superstitions; and desired earnestly to see the Lord's Supper re-established among them in its apostolic purity. The christians of Geneva asked for the Bible in the first place, and for the Sacrament in the second. That is in the regular course. The Word of God creates the christian: the Lord's Supper strengthens him. Christ first imparts to his disciples the knowledge of the truth, which He does by the ministry of the Word. Then He desires them to understand that he gives not only christian ideas to believers, but that he gives himself, his own life—that he comes (in his own words) to *abide in them*.<sup>\*</sup> This is the second phase of faith, and the Lord's Supper is its sign.

The christians of Geneva, enlightened by Scripture, desired the Holy Communion. But, said they, who will give it us? They had no ministers. Had not Luther declared ten years before that in order to avoid irregularity, the assembly, making use of its right, ought to elect one or more believers to exercise the charge of the Word, in the name of all.<sup>†</sup> They turned their eyes on Guerin. Few of the reformed were so much esteemed as he was. Being an evan-

<sup>\*</sup> St. John xv. 4, 5.

<sup>†</sup> 'Wie man Kirchen Diener wählen und einsetzen soll.'—Luth. *Opp.* lib. xviii. p. 433.

gelical christian and not a political huguenot, he had 'an ardent love for his brethren' and a zeal full of boldness to profess the Gospel. It required some courage to preside at the Lord's Supper in Geneva in the presence of the Romish mass. 'The flesh is always cowardly,' said a christian of Geneva, 'and pulls backwards, like an aged ass; and accordingly it needs the goad and spur as much as he does.'\* Guerin possessed, moreover, a cultivated understanding, and was learned in theology.†

There remained one question: Where should the communion be held?—'At Baudichon's,' answered one of them. 'No,' said the more prudent; 'not in the city for fear of the opposition of the priests, who are very irritated already.' Upon this Stephen d'Adda said, 'I have a little walled garden near the city gates, where nobody can disturb us.' The place was selected, the day named, and an hour fixed which would permit them to meet without disturbance. It was early in the morning, as it would appear.‡

When the day arrived, many persons went out of the city and quietly directed their steps towards D'Adda's garden, situated in a place called Pré l'Evêque, because the bishop had a house there.

\* Calvin.

† Spon, *Hist. de Genève*.

‡ It seems clear from Froment's narrative (p. 48) that the first communion took place before the riots (p. 51), and therefore probably before the middle of March. Spon confirms Froment's account (i. p. 481). On the other hand Sister Jeanne de Jussie says that a sacrament was celebrated after the first riot, on Holy Saturday, April 10th (*Le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 61). The only way of reconciling these two statements is to admit (as we have done) two different celebrations (in March and April), and not one only.

A table had been prepared in a room or in the open air. The believers as they arrived took their seats in silence on the rude benches, not without fear that the priests should get information of the furtive meeting.\* Guerin sat down in front of the table. Just at the moment (we are told) when the ceremony was about to begin, the sun rose and illumined with his first rays a scene more imposing in its simplicity than the mountains capped with everlasting snow, above which the star of day was beginning his course. The pious Guerin stood up, and after a prayer he distributed the bread and wine, and all together praised the Lord. The communicants quitted D'Adda's garden full of gratitude towards God.

It was not long, however, before their peace was troubled. Their enemies could not contain themselves, and threatened nothing less than excommunication and imprisonment. There were disputes. The priests shrugged their shoulders at the sight of those paltry assemblies. They said that the reformed, by busying themselves so much about *Christ*, deprived themselves of the *Church*; while Olivetan and Guerin maintained that the catholics, by speaking so much of the *Church*, deprived themselves of *Christ*. The meeting of a few souls endowed with a lively faith, who came to glorify Jesus Christ, was (they believed) a truer church than the pope, cardinals, and all the pomps of the Vatican. The exasperated priests vented their anger specially on Guerin, and the danger which threatened him was so great, that he had to leave the city. Hurrying quickly away, he took refuge at Yvonand with his

\* 'Furtivo conventu.'—Spanheim, *Geneva restit.* p. 45.



friend Froment, from whom he had received so much enlightenment.\*

Thus Farel, Froment, and Guerin were compelled, one after another, to quit Geneva; but the catholics laboured in vain: 'the reformed met every day in houses or gardens to pray to God, to sing psalms and christian hymns, and to explain Holy Scripture. And the people began to dispute with the priests, and to discuss with them publicly.'†

Thus there were two winds blowing in different directions at Geneva—one from the north, the other from the south. They could not fail to come into violent collision and to engender a frightful tempest.

\* Froment, *Gestes*, pp. 48-51. Gautier MS. Spon, *Hist. de Genève*, i. p. 481.

† *Vie de Farel*. Choupard MS.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## FORMATION OF A CATHOLIC CONSPIRACY.

(LENT, 1533.)

**E**VANGELICAL zeal was the occasion of the persecution. Its enemies were angered; they could not understand the inappreciable life then fermenting among their people. If a meeting was suppressed in one house, it was held in another. 'They could not find any remedy against this.'

One, however, offered itself. A dominican monk, an inquisitor of the Faith, had just arrived in Geneva. 'He is a great orator,' was the report in the city, 'a fervent catholic, just the opposite of Bocquet.' He had come to preach the Lent sermons in the greyfriar's stead, and everybody hoped he would repair the evil the other had done. 'Deliver us from this heresy,' said the heads of the Dominicans to him. The monk, flattered by this confidence and proud of his mission, prepared a fine discourse, and the next day or the next but one after Guerin's departure he went into the pulpit. St. Dominic's church was crowded, and a good many evangelicals, including Olivetan, were present. After a short introduction the monk began with loud voice and ardent zeal to decry the Bible, to abuse the heretics,\* and to exalt the pope. 'He

\* *Lutheranos proscindentem.*—Turretini MS.

uttered without restraint all that came into his head.' 'I will blacken them so,' he had said, 'that they shall never be washed clean.'

Great was the excitement among the huguenots. 'If any one of us is so bold as to move his lips,' they said, 'such a little liberty makes our masters bawl out like madmen; but they are allowed to pour out their poison and infect the world with it.' Olivetan, who was present during the sermon, could hardly contain himself, but as soon as it was ended, he got upon a bench, thinking it would be wrong of him not to make the truth known. 'Master,' he said, 'I desire to show you honestly from Scripture where you have erred in your discourse.' These words created great astonishment. What! a layman presume to teach the Church.

. . . . The priests and some of their creatures surrounded Olivetan, abused him, pushed him off the bench, and would have beaten him. 'Whereupon up came Claude Bernard, Jean Chautemps, and others, who took their friend away from the monks and people who desired to kill him.' . . . . But he did not escape so easily: the council sentenced him to banishment, without hearing or appeal. Everyone regretted him: 'He was a man,' they said, 'of such learning, godly life and conversation!' Olivetan was forced to leave. Geneva, suffering under a violent commotion, cast off the evangelists one after another, as the sea casts up the fragments of a wreck.\*

The clerical party was beginning to doubt whether these banishments were enough. . . . . When Farel was expelled, Froment appeared; when Froment

had got away, Guerin presided over a Lutheran sacrament; when Guerin had been obliged to make his escape, Olivetan got upon a bench in the church and publicly contradicted an inquisitor! He too was gone, but others would not fail to come forward. . . . Canon Wernli, equerry De Pesmes, the bold Thomas Moine, and other catholic chiefs, thought that an end should be put to this state of things. The reformed saw the danger that threatened them. Baudichon de la Maisonneuve consulted with his friend Claude Salomon. They argued that as Friburg desired to enslave their consciences, they ought to apply to Berne to deliver them. Salomon wished to consult the Genevese councillors favourable to the Reform. 'No,' said Baudichon, 'let us ask nobody's opinion; let us do the business alone. Which of the council would join us? John Philippe, John Lullin, Michael Sept, Stephen of Chapeaurouge, Francis Favre, Claude Roset? True, they are all friends of independence, but they have an official position. If we apply to them, we shall only compromise them. We are at liberty to expose our own lives, but not those of our friends. Let us go to Berne alone.' Nevertheless two magistrates, Domaine d'Arlod and Claude Bernard, were informed of their intention. They were embarrassed, for they knew that such a step might cost the lives of those who ventured it. The courage of the two patriots affected them. 'We believe we are following God's will,' said Maisonneuve. 'In that case,' replied Arlod, 'we shall give you no instructions either verbal or written, we shall only say: *Do whatsoever God shall inspire you to do.*' It was with these



words, recorded in the registers, that the two Genevans departed for Berne.\*

As soon as they arrived, they appeared before the council and explained how the clergy were endeavouring to stifle the germs of faith in their birth. The Bernese did not hesitate: greatly irritated by the violence which the Genevans had used towards Farel,† in despite of their letters of recommendation, they made answer that they would do everything to support the Gospel in Geneva.

On the 25th of March the council of Geneva met. There was evidently something new: many of the members wore an anxious look; others appeared cheerful. Du Crest, the premier syndic, a man devoted to the Romish Church, announced with an air of consternation, that he had just received a letter from Berne in which the council of Geneva was severely reprimanded. In truth, the Bernese did not mince matters: they complained of the violence done to Farel and the persecution organised in Geneva against the evangelical faith. ‘We are surprised,’ they said, ‘that in your city the faith in Jesus Christ and those who seek it are so molested. . . You will not suffer the Word of God to be freely proclaimed, and banish those who preach it.’‡

This letter troubled the council. ‘If we concede what Berne demands,’ they said, ‘the priests will get up fresh disturbances. If we refuse, Berne will break off the alliance, and the reformed will revolt.’

\* Council Registers, 29th March, 1533.—Gautier MS.

† ‘Violentia qua in Farellum sævitum.’—Spanheim, *Geneva restit.* p. 57.

‡ Letter from Berne, 20th March, 1533.—MS. Archives of Geneva, No. 1090.

Whichever way they turned, danger seemed to threaten them. 'So that they knew not what answer to give,' adds the register. Almost all of them were enraged against Maisonneuve and Salomon. They were brought before the council and confessed that they had gone to Berne and had solicited the letter which had been sent. Upon this several mamelukes called out 'treason;' but the consciences of these two noble citizens bore witness that they had served the cause of liberty and justice. They remained firm, and the council, being disturbed and undecided, adjourned to the next day the question of what was to be done.\*

The agitation spread from the council-room to the chapter-house and into the city. Everyone spoke about Berne's demand of full liberty for the gospel. The canons, priests, and most devout of the laity were unanimous for refusing; the daring Thomas Moine became the soul of this movement. They resolved, upon his proposition, to intimidate the council and obtain from it the total suppression of the evangelical meetings. Forthwith the most zealous of the party went into the city and visited from house to house.† At the same time Moine got a few of his friends together and proposed to go to the council in a body: their numbers, he doubted not, would overawe the syndics, and the catholics would obtain their demands. This measure was resolved upon, and the meeting fixed for the morrow.

Next day, when the council met, they were told

\* Council Registers, 25th March, 1533.—Gautier MS.

† 'Accedunt clerici plebem sibi obnoxiam.'—Spanheim, *Geneva restit.* p. 57.

that a considerable number of citizens desired an audience. They were admitted, to the number of about two hundred, including Thomas Moine, B. Faulchon, François du Crest, Percival de Pesmes, and Andrew Maillard: their countenances bore the mark of violent passions. ‘Most honoured lords,’ said Moine, who was a clever speaker, ‘notwithstanding the edict which bids us live like brothers, many persons are endeavouring to sow disorder and dissension among us. Some of them have gone to Berne, and the lords of that place have written you a letter which disturbs all the city. . . Who are those guilty men who go and denounce their country to the foreigner? Were they deputed by the council? What instructions did they receive? What answer did they bring you? We beg to be informed on these matters. We wish to know them, and whether anything has been done tending to the ruin of the republic.’

The premier-syndic, amazed at such a speech, begged Moine and his friends to retire, and the embarrassed council determined to procrastinate.

‘We will do everything in the world to bring this difficult matter to a happy conclusion,’ they answered. ‘We will assemble the Sixty, the Two Hundred, the heads of families, even the general council, if necessary . . . the whole republic. Rest content with this promise.’

‘We have been deputed,’ answered Moine, ‘to demand that you should produce before us those who went to Berne. We will not leave this room until we have seen them. If you do not summon them, we will go and fetch them.’

On hearing these words the council grew alarmed.

What a disturbance and what violence there would be in the council-chamber if the two huguenots should appear before these excited catholics! . . . The syndics replied that they would return an answer. This procrastination put the mamelukes beside themselves. It was not Moine alone who protested: the two hundred who surrounded him raised their hands and shouted in menacing tones: 'Justice, justice! Let us keep our promise to Messieurs of Friburg—that Geneva would preserve the faith of its fathers.' The alarmed syndics endeavoured by exceeding gentleness of manner (says a manuscript) to appease the tumult; and the two hundred discontented catholics returned to their homes with haughty look and resolute air. 'If the council haggles any more,' they said, 'we will do ourselves justice!' In the city, men said: 'We thought the catholics decrepid, downcast, asleep, or dead . . . but they are opening their heavy eyes; their strength is returning, and the swift-flying vultures are about to pounce upon their prey.'\*

In fact, two of the syndics, and several councillors, with other laymen of the catholic party and some priests, went into the city, and endeavoured to persuade all they met to enter into the plot formed against the Gospel. They told them that there was nothing to be expected from the council. 'If the faith of our fathers is to stand, by our own hands it must be supported,' they said. 'Hold yourselves in readiness to march against the Lutherans.'

The *Lutherans*, they said. It was indeed the Reformation that was then stirring up all the wrath of

\* Council Registers, 26th March, 1533.—Gautier MS.; Roset *Chron.* liv. ii. ch. ix.



the clerical party. Some of its members, no doubt, hated liberty as much as the Gospel; but most of the catholics would have tolerated the ancient franchises of the people. The point on which they were all agreed was an unquenchable opposition to that new doctrine which they called *Lutheranism*, Luther being in their opinion its great apostle. This Lutheranism was fundamentally what was afterwards named Calvinism, for Luther and Calvin were one in the great evangelical principles. All the reformers preached in the sixteenth century, in Europe, and particularly at Geneva, that the pure grace of God was the only power of eternal salvation, and that the Church was composed of all those who possessed true faith, and not of those who slavishly adhered to a dominating hierarchy. The doctrines of Lutheranism and of the Reform\* might differ, in regard to certain abstract questions, as touching the finite and the infinite, for instance: Lutheranism might put in bolder relief the *immanence* of God, while the Reform inclined towards his *transcendence*, to use the language of philosophers and theologians; but they were and they are agreed in all that is essential; and it was these living doctrines that a powerful party was endeavouring to expel from Geneva.

On Thursday night the canons, priests, and chief ‘partisans of the papal religion,’ as Wernli, De Pesmes, Moine, and their friends, met in the vicar-episcopal’s great hall. They arrived one after another, most of them armed to the teeth, and breathing vengeance: the room was soon filled, and many stood

\* The word Reform is applied exclusively to the Franco-Helvetic or Calvinistic portion of the Reformation.

in the court-yard. Their intention was carefully to arrange the plot that was to free them from the Reform. Some huguenots, informed of the conspiracy, drew near to watch their adversaries. The circumstances, the tumultuous crisis that was approaching, the interests to be discussed, the violent passions with which the two parties were animated, the late hour at which this conference was held—all combined to render it a solemn one. Men's minds became clouded, and certain huguenots of ardent imagination, who gazed at a distance upon the walls behind which these plotters were assembled, indulging in fantastic visions, fancied they saw the furies, torch in hand, stirring up discord;\* but they were merely monks clad in their long robes, and holding the torches with which the hall was lighted. At length the proceedings began.† Some of the speakers represented that the number of rebels increased daily; that the sacerdotal authority decreased proportionately; and that if things were allowed to go on so, ere long nobody would take any account of the Church. 'Let us not lower ourselves to dispute with heretics. Let us not wait for help from the magistrates. The Council of Sixty is about to meet, but they will hesitate just like the ordinary council. Those bodies are too weak; we must act without the government; we are the strongest. If it comes to fighting, the defenders of catholicism will be ten, perhaps twenty, to one. When the evangelists are conquered, we will invite the bishop back, who will return with all the banished mamelukes, and inflict on the rebels the punishment they deserve.

\* 'Nocte furiis facibusque strenue a clero subditis.'—Spanheim, *Geneva restit.*

† Froment, *Gestes*, p. 51.

Geneva, preserved from the Reformation, will no longer be able to spread it through the surrounding countries, and will be in future ages the support of the papacy. Let us execute justice for ourselves ; let us fly to arms, ring the tocsin, draw the sword, and call upon the faithful to march against those *dogs*, and make a striking example of the two traitors who went to Berne. Let us kill all who are called Lutherans, without sparing one ;\* which will be doing God a good service. We are assured of the bishop's pardon : his lordship has already sent us the pardons in blank. At the sound of the great bell, let everyone go armed to the Molard, and let the city gates be shut, so that nobody may escape.' This is what was said in the vicar-episcopal's house. The leaders agreed upon the place of meeting, the number of the armed bands, the names of those who should command them, and the manner in which the reformed should be attacked ; everything was arranged. The assembly applauded ; the conspirators, raising their hands, bound themselves by a solemn oath to execute the plan and to secrecy ;† after which they retired to take a brief repose. The festival of Easter was approaching : more than two centuries before, the Sicilian Vespers had filled Palermo and all Sicily with massacre ; the enemies of the Reformation in Geneva desired also to celebrate the same festival with rivers of blood.

The Council of Sixty met the next day (Friday, 28th March 1533). Never perhaps was there a body more divided. When the catholics demanded that the promise made to Friburg should be kept, the

\* Froment, *Gestes*, p. 51.

† 'Solenni sacramento.'—Spanheim, *Geneva restit.*

huguenots represented that if the council decided in favour of the Romanist party, not only would the bishop resume his former power, but that having seen the Reform on the brink of triumphing, he would throw himself into the arms of Savoy, as the only power capable of saving the Roman faith. The council, placed between these two fierce currents, remained in its usual indecision, and declared in favour of neither. This was just what the leaders of the Romanist party expected. Everything was prepared for carrying out the *conspiracy* (to use Froment's word) which had been planned the night before.\*

The cathedral had been selected as the place of meeting. The first who entered it was the valiant canon, Peter Wernli. He was armed from head to foot, and advanced into the sanctuary as a general goes to battle. Wernli handled the sword as well as his brother, who was a captain in the service of the king of France. Gifted with the strength of a Hercules or a Samson, he designed, like the first, to drive Cerberus out of the city; and like the second, to pull down the pillars of the temple. He said to those who had gathered round him in St. Pierre's: 'We will cut off the heads of those who went to Berne and of all their friends.' Three hundred armed canons and priests came after him, and then a great number of their lay followers. 'The Lutherans threaten us,' said some of these angry citizens; 'they want to rob the churches and convents.' Such a tale could not fail to excite their minds still more.

The huguenots, informed of the plot arranged at

\* Froment, *Gestes*, p. 50.—Roset MS., *Chron.* liv. ii. ch. x.—Gautier MS.



the vicar-general's, and observing the catholics making ready for the attack, saw at once that their first act would be to seize Baudichon de la Maisonneuve, on account of his journey to Berne, and inflict on him the fate of Berthelier and Levrier. They therefore assembled to the number of sixty around their friend to defend his life at the price of their blood. Some of Moine's partisans went to inform the assemblage at St. Pierre's that they had seen several persons enter Maisonneuve's house.

This information was a signal of battle to the conspirators. 'Forward!' they cried: 'let us go and attack them!' Two catholics, friends of peace, who happened to be in the church (B. Faulchon and Girardin de la Rive), fearing a civil war, ran to the council. 'Both parties are under arms,' they said; 'some at St. Pierre's, others at Baudichon's: the first are preparing to march down against their opponents. . . . Should they do so, there will be a great disturbance:\* look you to it.' The council, suspending all other business, ordered the four syndics to proceed with the badges of their office, first to St. Pierre's (for the aggressors were there), and next to Maisonneuve's, and command both parties to return immediately to their homes.†

The task was a difficult one, but the four magistrates did not hesitate to undertake it. Preceded by their ushers they entered the cathedral, with the syndical staff in their hands. At the sight of them

\* The register has the word *ovaille* (ovallium), Council Registers, 28th March, 1533.

† Roset MS. *Chron.* liv. ii. ch. x.—Gautier MS. Council Register *ad diem*. La Sœur de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 51.

the crowd grew calm. 'We desire to know,' said the premier-syndic, 'the cause of this meeting.' The assembly answered with one voice: 'We are going to fight the Lutherans who are assembled in the Rue des Allemands. They are always keeping us in fear, and we must put an end to it. We can no longer endure such a pest in the city. . . . They are worse than the Turks.' \*

At this moment two of the reformed, uneasy as to what might happen, approached the cathedral, and mounting the steps before the porch, stood there some time, peeping into the church, undecided whether they should enter. The priests and mamelukes perceiving them, exclaimed: 'Look at the wicked wretches, they are come to spy the christians!' At last, with more zeal than prudence, the two evangelicals entered. They were J. Goulaz and P. Vandel, the latter a man of twenty-six, who had adopted the Reform, but always retained a great affection for his old catholic friends.† Addressing the syndics with great mildness, he said: 'Pray put an end to this disturbance, lest worse should come of it.' When the mamelukes heard his words, they became angry and drew their swords to strike the two huguenots. Portier, the episcopal secretary, a violent and fanatical man, seeing Vandel, exclaimed: 'How is it that you are here, traitor!' Several of them rushed upon Vandel, threw him to the ground, and trampled on him; Portier, drawing his dagger (*sanguidede*) and seizing the young man 'in a cowardly manner by the back,' (says the Council Register) stabbed him near

\* *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 51.

† Galiffe, *Notices généalogiques de Genève*, I. p. 80.

the left shoulder, intending to kill him. Vandel lay seriously wounded on the pavement of the cathedral 'with great effusion of blood.'\*

A crowd of priests immediately gathered round him and began to lament loudly, not because a man had been stabbed, but because blood had defiled the temple. 'Never after was bell rung or divine service performed in that church, or even in the other churches, because the mother-church was closed, until it was purified by My lord the suffragan,' says Sister Jeanne.

Goulaz, it is reported, seeing his friend on the ground, ran off to the evangelicals and told them all. Some of them, notwithstanding the danger which they incurred, proceeded to the cathedral, and obtained the syndics' permission to carry Vandel away. They removed him to Baudichon's house, where they got him to bed. A few huguenots constituted themselves his nurses, and as they looked on their pale and blood-stained friend, they asked one another what would happen next.

\* La Sœur de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 52.—Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, pp. 50–51.

## CHAPTER XV.

FIRST ARMED ATTACK OF THE CATHOLICS UPON THE  
REFORMATION.

(MARCH 28, 1533).

THIS effusion of blood, far from calming men's minds, served but to inflame them. 'All good christians were more excited than before,' says Sister Jeanne. The skirmish in which, being seven hundred against two, they had gained the advantage, was an omen of victory! They looked at each other and counted their numbers. 'We are the majority and well armed,' they said; 'we must sally out boldly and fight these rascals.' The principal leaders, lay and ecclesiastic, withdrawing into a private part of the cathedral, held a final council. The most influential represented that the huguenots had celebrated the sacrament, that they persevered in holding their meetings 'here and there,' that the sacerdotal authority was decreasing and the number of heretics increasing, and that there was only one means left of saving the Romish faith—putting every heretic to death.\* The syndics stretched out their wands in vain, and ordered them to keep the peace. All was useless. 'Now is the time,' cried the priests; 'let us run to the great bell and give the signal.' At the word many hastened

\* Froment, *Gestes*, p. 51.



to the tower of the church and began to ring the tocsin. At the same time those who were in the church prepared to march.

Three of the syndics were devoted to the catholic party: Nicholas du Crest, Pierre de Malbuisson, and Claude Baud. Finding that they could not stop the riot, they determined if possible to direct it. Claude Baud, lord of Troches, in whose castle many a plot had been concocted against the independence of Geneva, would have desired to make an end of the Reform, but not by violent means. Seeing, however, that it was impossible to check the torrent, he put himself at the head of the *émeute*, but with the hope of restraining it, and afterwards of repressing the Reform by legal means. ‘Shut the doors of the church,’ said Baud. This had a surprising effect: the catholics on a sudden grew calmer. The syndic feared that if they came to blows, the two parties might become confused in the battle, and that friends would strike friends without recognising each other. He ordered a great bundle of laurel boughs to be brought in, and addressing the crowd around him, said: ‘Formerly, citizens, they used to give garlands to the conquerors; I give you these laurels before the victory: they will distinguish you from the wicked.’ The combatants each took a sprig and fastened it to their caps; and then the pious catholics who were in the crowd, wishing to give a religious character to the *émeute*, proposed that they should implore the blessing of heaven before they started. The ecclesiastics were silent immediately, and turning to the choir, prostrated themselves in fervent devotion before the high altar. All present knelt down ‘with great abundance of

tears,' and sang the famous hymn of the Roman breviary :

Vexilla regis prodeunt.\*

As soon as the strain was ended, one of the priests said: 'Let us commend ourselves to the blessed Virgin, that she may intercede for us and for the holy faith!' And all, as with one voice, joined in the *Salve Regina*—a prayer which the people were accustomed to sing at the execution of a criminal. The echoes of this ominous chant having died away in the aisles of the vast cathedral, the priests rose from their knees: one of them took the cross, while some laid hold of other banners. 'Behold,' they said, 'behold the standards of the king advancing.' The excitement grew greater every minute. It was Friday, the one before Passion Week. 'Let us this day call to mind the day on which our Lord was willing to shed his blood for us, and therefore let us not spare ours. Let us take vengeance on his enemies who crucify him anew more cruelly than the Jews did.'† They uttered such cries that 'it was quite pitiful to hear them,' and 'there was no heart so hard as not to melt into tears.'‡

All this emotion was not without a cause. The religion of the middle ages was disappearing. We believe that it must disappear altogether; and yet we are touched by the enthusiasm displayed by its adherents, which was worthy of a better cause. Syndic

\* 'The standards of the king go forth.'—Rambach, *Anthologie christliche Gesänge*, i. 104. The use Dante made of the first line of this hymn is well known :

Vexilla Regis prodeunt Inferni.—*Inferno*, xxxiv. 1.

† La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 53.

‡ Ibid. Froment, *Gestes*, &c. p. 51.

Baud, who wished to give an appearance of legality to the clerical movement, called Percival de Pesmes, and ordered him to go with a body of men and fetch the banner of the city. At length the great bell, which had kept on ringing, was silent; the ringers came down from the tower and joined the rest of their party. The churchmen then formed into companies and elected their captains; all were full of courage and ardour, and St. Pierre's resembled a parade-ground rather than a church. The companies defiled in front of the high altar, and the syndic, ordering the doors to be thrown open, all the clerical army quitted the temple, descended with a firm step the steep street of the Perron, and proceeded towards the Molard, which was the general rendezvous for those who desired on that day to destroy both the reformed and the Reformation in Geneva.

As soon as the tocsin was heard, the city was agitated to its most retired quarters, and even the inhabitants of the surrounding districts had listened with alarm to its ill-omened sound. The startled and uneasy citizens caught up their arms, rushed hastily from their houses, and ran 'like poor wandering sheep without a shepherd,' some one way, some another, not knowing where to go, what was the matter, and whether the enemy was within the walls or without. The peasants of the vicinity, forewarned by the agents of the canons, entered the city in arms. The confusion continued to increase: some cried 'Fire,' others 'Fall on;,' all shouted 'Alarm, alarm!' Some ran to the gates, others to the hôtel-de-ville, and others to the ramparts; but the priests who had contrived the affair, and who were marching 'in large bands' from

different quarters towards the Molard, excited the ignorant people to follow them, and shouting so as to drown all other cries, 'Down with the Lutherans,' thus made it known who were the enemies to be attacked. 'To the Molard,' they added; 'Down with the dogs that want to destroy our holy mother Church.' No fervent catholic hesitated; all ran along the streets, isolated or in bands; they drew their swords, then arquebusses rattled. . . . It was like a flock of birds in search of their prey, opening their talons, and plunging swiftly upon the Molard.\*

Meanwhile the main clerical body, that which started from St. Pierre's, arrived. It numbered from six to seven hundred men—canons, priests, monks, sacristans, and devout laymen, all well armed, Syndic Baud marching at their head, and 'wearing his great hat and feathers.' When this body debouched on the square by the arcade of the Fort de l'Ecluse, the Molard and adjacent streets were filled with an agitated and confused crowd. But immediately, by the syndic's order, companies were formed in imitation of that of St. Pierre's, and all the people put themselves 'in order for fighting.' Baud having thus drawn out his corps, proceeded to count them: there were about 2,500 men,† not reckoning the old men, women, and children, who shouted and wept, and although unarmed, added to the tumult. The catholics were full of hope. To the majority of them, the struggle

\* Council Registers, *ad diem*.—Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 51. Gautier MS.

† La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 51. The number is probably exaggerated.



was a mere party matter ; but others, better instructed and better theologians than the rest, felt that it was an effort to expel for ever from Geneva the doctrines of protestantism touching the pre-eminence of Holy Scripture, justification, works, the mass, the Church, and especially grace, to which alone the Reformation attributed salvation, while the Romish Church claimed a part in conversion for the natural powers of man, and looked upon this difference between the two Churches as the essential point. At the same time, however, it must be acknowledged that just then they troubled themselves very little about theology. Being ready to contend with the arms of men of war, the two bodies were especially animated by political passions. The catholics feared lest their enemies should succeed in escaping. ‘Shut the gates of the city,’ said the syndic, ‘so that no one can take flight.’ Again cries were heard: ‘Forward, lead us to Baudichon’s.’ ‘No,’ answered Baud, ‘let us wait for the other corps before we attack.’

There were still three bands to come: the first, commanded by the bishop’s equerry, Percival de Pesmes, was to come straight from the hôtel-de-ville, bringing the banner, as we have said; the second, commanded by Canon de Veigy, descending from the west, was to make for the Molard by the Rue de la Cité; the third, coming from the suburb of St. Gervais, was to cross the Rhone bridge, and was commanded by Captain Bellessert. ‘He was a stout fellow and like a madman,’ says Froment. The band that he conducted was the most violent in the republic. These three corps united with the 2,500 men already

at the Molard could not fail to give the death-blow to the reformed and the Reformation.

But as they did not appear, the catholics and mamelukes who were ready for fighting, zealous in the cause of the pope, and overflowing with hatred for the Reform, became impatient, and striking the ground with the butt-ends of their guns, desired to march forthwith. 'Forward!' they cried. 'Let us wait,' said the syndic, whether because he feared that 'their business would not take well,' as the chronicle says; or because he wished by an imposing force to constrain the reformed to surrender without fighting; or, lastly, because he hoped that if he procrastinated, some unforeseen circumstance might happen to disarm the combatants. 'We want artillery,' he said, 'to besiege Baudichon's house.' This quieted the most ardent, by giving them something to do; they hurried off to the arsenal, but it was doubtful whether it would be opened to them, as the captain-general was opposed to them. The artillery-keeper, named Bossu (hunchback), in consequence of his infirmity, a man of vulgar character and suspected morals, and a strong partisan of the priests, did not hesitate. He delivered up the artillery to the catholics, who dragged away the cannon with much uproar, planted them in the square, and loaded them.\*

At this moment arrived the band led by the descendant of the crusaders, the young and dashing Percival de Pesmes, eager to fight, like his fathers, for

\* Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 52.—La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Lévain du Calvinisme*, p. 53.—Roset MS., liv. ii. ch. viii.

the pope and his Church against these new Saracens. He bore the great banner with pride, and, defiling with his corps, drew them up in line of battle. Syndic Baud took the banner from his hands, and planted it in the middle of the square. The people, electrified at the sight, 'raised a loud shout.'\* There is no longer any doubt: the republic is arming, the city banner floats above the catholic ranks, and the huguenots are only rebels.

The monks took the most active part in this business; the convents were therefore empty, all but that of Saint Claire, which alone was not deserted. The nuns, however, wished to take part in the struggle: 'Alas!' they said, 'our worthy fathers have gone to share in the fight with a number of monks, because it is in behalf of the faith. . . . Let us kneel before God that He may show mercy to the poor city.' The mother abbess drew a cross of ashes on the foreheads of the sisters, after which they marched in procession round the cloister, invoking in devout litanies the protection of the whole celestial choir. Then forming a cross, they took their places in the middle of the choir, and there, distracted and weeping, they fell on their knees and cried aloud: 'Mercy, O God! through the intercession of the glorious Virgin Mary and all the Saints! Give victory to the Christians, and bring the poor wanderers back to the way of salvation.'†

At this moment the sisters heard a noise at the gate of the convent: it was a few good catholic women who, very much afraid themselves, came to bring the

\* La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain*, &c. p. 53.

† Ibid. p. 57.

sisters tidings calculated to add to their distress. ‘If the heretics win the day,’ they said, ‘they will certainly make you all marry, young and old—all to your perdition.’\* This was the customary bugbear of the poor nuns. They were superstitious and even fanatical, but nothing indicates that they were not pure. A tradition to the effect that there was an underground communication between their convent and that of the gray friars is a fiction as void of foundation as the frightful news of a *forced marriage* brought by their indiscreet friends. The terrified nuns crossed themselves, sang their litanies once more, and cried louder than ever: ‘O holy Virgin, give victory to the Christians!’

The agitation in the city was then at its height; the shouts of the priests were frightful.† They bawled lustily to those who lagged behind, exhorted those who appeared indifferent, and animated the whole body with voice and gesture, as hunters urge their hounds after the stag. The catholics responded to the tumultuous clamours of these ministers of disorder and strife. But the tempest was not confined to the streets: scenes still more harrowing were taking place in the houses. ‘Alas!’ said the wisest men, ‘there is no humanity left, and they take no account of the ties of nature.’ One of the most fiery catholics, hearing the tocsin, was hurriedly fitting on his armour, when his wife, a fervent Romanist like himself, and whose father was at the head of the Lutherans, was filled with terror at seeing her husband’s animation, and looked at him with a dejected countenance.

\* La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain*, &c. p. 57.

† Roset MS. *Chron.*



She was Micah, daughter of Baudichon de la Maison-neuve. Her catholic faith did not make the young wife forget the sweet and holy ties that bind a child to her father. She shuddered at each malediction uttered by her husband against the author of her days. At length her grief broke out in a flood of tears. Her fanatical husband, exasperated to the highest degree against Maisonneuve, who was regarded as the main support of the heresy, turned back and, without showing the least pity, said: 'Wife, cry as much as you please. If we come to blows and I meet your father, he shall be the first on whom I shall try my strength. . . . I will kill him, or he shall kill me.' And then, callous at the sight of Micah, whose tears flowed faster at these words which pierced her heart, the barbarous husband said as he left her: 'He is a bad Christian, a renegade, the worst of the worst—this wretched Baudichon!'<sup>\*</sup> Micah was twice married: first to Bernard Combet, and secondly to Guyot Taillon. We have not been able to discover which of her two husbands was so cruel; probably it was the first.

These distressing scenes became more heart-rending every moment. In the houses nothing was heard but the cries and groans of mothers and wives, of daughters and young children. The streets echoed with the oaths of the men who cursed *that law* (the Reformation), and the first man who had brought it there. 'In truth, it is not possible,' says the chronicler, 'to describe the cries and tears which then filled the whole city.' But the mournful sounds of grief and

<sup>\*</sup> La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain*, &c. p. 54.

sorrow which rose in the air could not drown the fanatical and sonorous voices of the priests.\*

During this time a deep and solemn awe prevailed in Baudichon's house. The evangelicals were not insensible to the hatred which was arrayed against them, but the greatness of the danger gave them that calmness which the Christian experiences in the presence of death. The strong encouraged the weak, addressing them in words of piety and feeling: 'Ah!' they said, 'if all the world would agree in the truth, we should be at peace; but as the majority fight against it, we cannot confess Christ without encountering resistance and hatred. It is the malice of the wicked one that divides us into contrary bands, and everywhere kindles strife and debate.' †

An unexpected reinforcement added to the numbers of the catholic troop. The women of that party had not all a tender soul and bruised heart, like Baudichon's daughter: the virtues of the evangelical women, the eagerness with which they had renounced their jewels and dress in favour of the poor, had excited the displeasure of many of them; and the thought that they no longer came to kneel with them at the altar of Mary, had filled them with anger and hatred. The tempest then sweeping through the city fanned the evil passions of the weaker sex. In every house the wives and sisters, and even the mothers of the catholics got ready; they assembled the children from twelve to fifteen years old, and proceeded with

\* Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 54.—La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 54.—Roset MS., *Chron.* liv. ii. ch. x.—Gautier MS.—Choupard MS.

† Ibid.

them to the Place d'Armes, where they had agreed to meet. 'In this assemblage of women,' says Sister Jeanne, who was very intimate with them, 'there were full seven hundred children from twelve to fifteen years old, firmly resolved to do good service along with their mothers.'

When these ladies met, they held a parliament of a new sort; and their speeches were far more impassioned than those of the men. They had no doubt that their husbands would put all their adversaries to death, but were vexed to think that their wives would be left alive. 'If it should happen,' said one of them, 'that our husbands fight against the unbelievers, let us also make war and *kill their heretic wives, in order that the breed may be extirpated.*'\* This was the only way, these pious ladies thought, of preserving Geneva catholic; if the wives and children were spared, the heresy would shoot forth again in a few years. A unanimous cry of approval was raised by the women, and even by the accompanying children, and the Amazons immediately prepared for the combat. They armed their children, distributing little hatchets and swords among them; when there were no more weapons to give out, their mothers told them to fill their hats and caps with stones. They, too, fiercely gathered up their aprons, which they filled with missiles. Sister Jeanne does not omit a single detail in her narrative, for it is of this that she is most proud. Some of these women had stationed themselves at the windows to crush the evangelicals at the moment of battle by pouring their missiles down upon them; but the more

\* La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain*, &c. p. 54.

determined marched with the children to the Molard, where they arrived with loud shouts. Strange madness! as if God who requires in the Christian woman *a meek and quiet spirit*, and forbids her to be adorned 'with braided hair and costly array,' did not all the more forbid her to arm herself with stones and march to battle. Frenzied and guilty women! Some huguenots, observing them from afar, asked with astonishment what could be the meaning of such a singular assemblage. They seemed to resemble those druidesses who (as it is related) when their sanctuary was threatened, ran to and fro along the shore of the lake, in black robes with hair dishevelled, and waving torches in their hands.\*

Delighted at the sight, the priests, unwilling to be behindhand, exclaimed: 'We will be the first to defend our spouse the Church.' There were about one hundred and sixty armed priests in the square. If the clergy and women set the example, shall the citizens remain behind? The whole body assembled at the Molard shouted again and again 'Forward, forward!' The syndics did not incline to attack, but the excited crowd carried them away.† The plan was to march to Baudichon's house, where the huguenots had assembled, to set fire to it, and thus, having forced them to come out, to murder them as they were escaping from the flames by the doors and windows.‡ Citizens, priests, women and even children, wished to have the

\* La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, pp. 54, 55.—Gautier MS.

† 'Plebs mota syndicos eodem traxit.'—Turretini manuscript in the library at Berne.

‡ 'Civis cujusdam domus concursu facto petitur; jam tormenta majora dirigebantur.'—Turretini MS.



privilege of being the first to strike Maisonneuve, Salomon, and their friends; torrents of heretical blood were to flow in the streets. 'Forward!' they repeated, but amid the general agitation the beautiful plumes that ornamented the syndic's hat remained stationary. Baud wishing to temporise, and to avoid bloodshed, refused to give the signal: 'To be more sure,' he said, 'and in order that none may escape from our hands, let us wait for the corps from St. Gervais.'\* The syndic still hoped that the reformed would lay down their arms and surrender at discretion to an imposing force.

The reformed assembled in Baudichon's house on the left bank of the river, at the corner of the streets of the Allemands and of the Corraterie (about 450 paces from the Molard) had gradually seen their numbers increase. Many of their friends, who at first desired to remain at home, observing the danger that threatened their brethren, had come to their help, determined to conquer or die with them. The enthusiasm had spread even to the children and excited them to acts of devotedness beyond their years. 'A young apprentice went there, in spite of father, mother, and priests, and exhorted them all to be of good cheer.†' The elder portion were not blind to the gravity of the situation, but they remained firm, being full of confidence in God. 'As a spark,' they said, 'may suddenly set fire to a whole city, so Geneva has in an instant been stirred up to riot. . . . But let not our hearts be troubled; the Lord holds the tempests and

\* La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, pp. 54, 55.—Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 50.—Gautier MS.

† Choupard MS.

whirlwinds in His hand, and can appease them whenever He pleases.'

Sinister omens might intimidate them. They had before them the unhappy Vandel, faint and bleeding. . . . They approached the wounded young man with compassion. 'See,' they said, 'see how the bishop and his officers treat the best citizens.' Noticing the paleness of his face, they despaired of his life, and gloomy thoughts filled their hearts.

This was not the only presage of the danger that threatened them; the shouts of the catholics, increasing in violence, reached even there. They looked at each other with astonishment and even with alarm. 'What fury!' they said; 'how large a number against so few!' And some of them added: 'If God be not for us, we are undone.' But others, changing the words, answered: '*If God be for us, who can be against us?*' De la Maisonneuve was the firmest. Possessing a quick and even violent temper, an enthusiast for liberty and truth, he was at this solemn hour calm, thoughtful, and christianlike. No one was more exposed than he: his house was to be as it were the battle-field; but forgetful of self, he went up to such as were dejected and said: 'We must show our magnanimity, even should they drive us to despair. The wicked are already erecting triumphal arches . . . in the air. God does not look to numbers, be they great or small, but to the cause for which they fight. If we are under the banner of Jesus, God will be a wall of brass to us.' These words encouraged such as were shaken, and gave joy to their afflicted hearts; and scarcely had Baudichon uttered them than those who stood round him fell on their knees and bowed before the Lord.

One of them prayed: 'O God, thou givest the rein to the wicked only so far as is necessary to try us. Stop them, therefore, and restrain them, lest they hurt us. Change the hearts of our enemies, and look only to the cause for which we are going to fight.' This simple prayer availed more than a *Salve Regina*. Rising from their knees, the friends of the Reform stretched out their hands and said: 'We swear to die in God's cause, and to keep faith and loyalty with one another.' And, like the martyrs of the early ages, they waited for the blow with which they were threatened, because they refused to abandon the Gospel which God was then restoring to Christendom.

While the evangelicals were praying, the band so impatiently expected from St. Gervais began to cross the bridge at last. The ex-syndic Jean-Philippe, now captain-general, who inclined to the Reform from political motives, being called by his office to repress all disorder, had taken his post between the bridge and the city, near Baudichon's house, and those who belonged to neither party had rallied round him. Just as the corps from the suburb was debouching from the bridge and entering the city, Philippe ordered them to return. At these words their leader, Bellessert the butcher, furious at the attempt to stop him, flew into a passion, and with horrible oaths struck the captain-general so violently with his halberd that he fell to the ground. At the instant Claude de Genève, and other citizens who followed Philippe, dashed forward to meet the assailants; the captain sprang to his feet, and, turning sword in hand upon the man who had struck him, wounded Bellessert. At the same time, his followers, hitting right and left, drove the

St. Gervaisians back upon the bridge. The latter attempted in vain to resume the offensive; Philippe's troop did not give them time to breathe. Many had been wounded, and disorder was in their ranks; they were too proud and violent to give way if they had not suffered much loss. At last they fled and returned dejected to their houses.\* The captain's followers immediately closed the bridge gate to prevent the people of the suburb from returning into the city.†

This measure exposed the reformed in St. Gervais to some danger. Aimé Levet lived, as we have said, at the other end of the bridge. His wife, distressed at the struggle and the wounds her brethren were about to give and to receive, had gone out, imprudently perhaps, and standing in the street, tried to discover what was going on. At this moment, the catholic women of the quarter, inflamed by the sight of their idol Bellessert's wounds, and determined not to be behind the women of the city in warlike zeal, caught sight of Claudine Levet, to whom they attributed all the mischief. With a loud cry they rushed upon her, exclaiming: 'Let us begin the war by throwing this dog into the Rhone.' Claudine, seeing the furies coming, uttered a shriek, and 'being tricky,' according to Sister Jeanne, returned hastily into the house and shut the door. It was certainly a very lawful *trick*. The catholic women instantly moved to attack it: but much as they tried to break the door down,

\* Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 52.—Council Registers of the 28th March, 1534.—La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 54.—Gautier MS.

† Ibid.



they could not succeed. They then vented their fury on the apothecary's drugs: at first they took what served for show, and then entering the shop 'threw them all contemptuously into the street.'\* This expedition against the drugs did not calm them: leaving the shop and standing in front of the house, they turned their angry eyes to Claudine's windows and used insulting language. Madame Levet remained calm in the midst of the uproar, and 'raised her thoughts to heaven, where she found great matter of joy to blot out all her sorrows.' At last the catholics retired, 'very wroth because they could not get at this woman or any other.' Claudine was saved.†

While this was going on, the third band expected at the Molard, that headed by Canon Veigy, had assembled in the upper part of the city. The immobility of the reformers, who did not leave Baudichon's house, fretted the canon and those whom he commanded. 'They keep themselves still as hares,' he said: 'we must compel them to leave their form.' This they prepared to do. It had been decided, as we have said, by Moine and his friends, the chiefs of the movement, that they should surround and set fire to Baudichon's house, so that the heretics should be stifled, burnt, driven out, and dispersed. In the opinion of some it was a capital idea of the huguenots to shut themselves up in one house, for by this means a single match would suffice to get rid of them . . . . But the plan of fire-raising was not to everybody's taste. 'It cannot be done without great mischief,' said the wiser heads; 'the whole street might be

\* La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain*, &c. p. 57.

† Ibid.

burnt down.' . . . The barbarous plan had, however, been resolved on, and its execution entrusted to Canon Veigy's corps. It was a churchman who had been charged with the cruel duty. 'Canon de Veigy was to pass through the narrow street of the Trois Rois,\* behind the Rhone, set fire to Baudichon's house, and drive *the others* into the street, so that they could escape nowhere.'†

The canon's band was preparing to descend into the city to perform its task, when some catholics, running to the hôtel-de-ville, announced the defeat of the troops from St. Gervais. 'We may expect a similar encounter,' said the canon and his subordinates ; and being not at all eager to measure weapons with the captain-general, they resolved to join the crowd on the Molard, by passing to the east, in order to be out of the reach of Philippe's attack, and to have a reinforcement to burn the huguenots. Changing their direction, they descended by the Rue Verdaine. When they arrived at the Molard, they were very ill received. Everybody reproached them, calling them cowards and traitors. The priest-party were 'greatly astonished and vexed because they had not set fire to the house, as had been agreed upon.'‡

The news of this scheme for burning them out had reached the citadel of the reformed. Maisonneuve and his friends hesitated no longer. Thus far they had responded to the fury of their adversaries by remaining quiet ; they desired as much as possible to

\* The Three Kings may still be seen carved over the gate of the large house (called Trois Rois) in Bel Air.

† Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 53.

‡ Choupard MS.—Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, pp. 52–54.—Gautier MS.

spare the effusion of blood; but now their moderation became useless. At first they had been only sixty, their numbers had increased, but they were still inferior to their adversaries: they determined, however, to repel force by force.\* They sallied forth, therefore, calm and silent, for they felt the gravity of the moment. On arriving in the Rue des Allemands they drew up in line of battle five deep, according to the Swiss practice. The front rank was about 250 paces from the enemy. They were determined not to take the offensive. 'We will wait for our adversaries,' they said; 'but if they attack us, we will sooner die than retreat a single step.'

Although they were, as we have said, by no means numerous in comparison with the several catholic bands, they were firm and full of hope. There were neither priests, women, nor children with them to embarrass them: all were stout, resolute, disciplined men, who feared not to fight one against ten. They did not, however, place their confidence in their strength; they did 'not turn from one side to the other to set their hopes in vain things;' the most pious among them 'repeated that there was not one spark of certain help for them except in God alone.'

The fight was about to begin. The reformed, knowing that the city artillery had been surrendered by the Bossu to their adversaries and pointed at the Molard, had procured some cannon, probably by the intervention of the captain-general. The huguenots marching boldly on two sides of the great square, had planted their guns—some in the Rue du Rhone, others

\* 'Erumpunt qui convenerant a protestantibus, vim vi repulsaturi.'—Turretini MS. at Berne.

in the Rue du Marché, only ninety paces from the catholics. On each side the artillery was ready to be discharged, the arquebuses were loaded, the spears and halberds were in the hands of the combatants, the women and children of the Romish party were bringing stones. There were transports of anger, cries, and terrible threats.\* All were prepared for the onset, and a massacre seemed inevitable.†

At this moment the sound of a trumpet was heard; it was not the signal of battle, but the prelude: the city crier, stopping at the corner of some neighbouring street, proclaimed, 'that every foreigner should retire to his lodging under pain of three lashes with a rope.' In this way they cleared the place where the battle was to be fought. The trumpet and the crier's shrill voice soon died away, and there was a deathlike silence. On each side there were noble souls, lovers of peace, who were a prey to the deepest emotions at the thought that brothers were about to attack brothers, and many turned a sorrowful look on the streets that were soon to be stained with the blood of their fellow-citizens. These compassionate men would have liked to restrain the fratricidal arms, but they trembled before the priests. 'No one,' says a contemporary, 'dared venture to speak to the ecclesiastics to propose peace; the great pride of the priests intimidated them, and they feared to be called Lutherans.'‡ To desire to prevent the shedding of blood, was to be a partisan of the Reformation.§ The parties cast threatening

\* 'Clamor, saxa, minæ, furor.'—Turretini MS.

† Utrunque ad cædes in proximo.'—Ibid.

‡ Froment, *Gestes*, &c. p. 54.

§ Ibid.



glances at each other, and the two armies were about to come into violent collision.

Then the agony burst forth. Some of the wives, mothers, and daughters, who were in the Place du Molard, and who up to this moment had been full of ardour for the combat, were moved and could not restrain their anguish. The tenderness of their sex resumed its sway: they let go their aprons, and the stones contained in them fell to the ground. They burst into tears and gave utterance to long and sorrowful moaning. ‘Alas!’ they said, ‘the father is armed against the son, brother against brother, neighbour against neighbour. . . . They are all ready to kill one another.’\* The emotion became almost universal.

Whilst many of the catholic women were thus transformed, the evangelical women who remained at home were praying. They reflected that, however the world may torment and vex, nothing can happen but what God Himself has ordained. They put the immutable decree of the Lord, who wills to maintain the kingdom of His Son for ever, in opposition to the wicked conspiracies by which the men of the world assail it, and doubted not that God would look upon and help them in their necessity.

‘It was God’s will,’ said Froment, ‘to avoid bloodshed, and He ordained it accordingly.’†

\* Froment, *Gestes*, &c. p. 54.

† Ibid. p. 55.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## TRUCE BETWEEN THE TWO PARTIES.

(FROM MARCH 28 TO MAY 4, 1533.)

JUST at that time some foreigners were staying in Geneva, and particularly seven merchants of Friburg, who had come for the fair. They looked with sorrow on the spectacle around them, and could not understand how citizens could go so far as to kill one another, 'to satisfy the appetite of their priests,' says a manuscript.\* These worthy Switzers came forward to mediate. The chiefs of the catholic party, not doubting that they were on their side, asked for their support. 'We do not meddle in business of this kind,' wisely answered the Friburgers, 'except it be to restore peace, since we are co-burghers and good friends with you as well as with the others.' They proceeded to the Rue des Allemands and said to the reformed: 'Look at the great multitude of people that is against you. This matter must be settled before worse befalls you.' The reformed, who were ready for the battle, made answer: 'The disturbance did not begin with us, and we should be distressed to do anything to the disadvantage of the Council or of the people. We only ask to be left at peace and to

\* Choupard MS. *Vie de Farel*.

live according to God, obeying the magistrates, as the Gospel commands. We are acting in self-defence, for they have conspired to kill us. If so many priests and monks remain assembled in the square, rest assured that we shall defend ourselves to the last, if it please God to assist us. But we are not pleased at having to fight against fathers, brothers, relations, friends and neighbours to gratify the appetites of the priests and monks.’\*

The Friburgers, encouraged by these words, returned to the Molard and addressing the priests, said: ‘It is neither good nor honourable, and above all it is not in accordance with your office, thus to excite the people to kill one another. It is your duty to be in your houses or at church praying to God rather than be thus in arms. When the people are at variance, you should reconcile them instead of exciting them to shed blood.’ These were christian words, and the laymen delivered an excellent exhortation to the clergy; but the latter were so enraged that they would listen to nothing. After the pacific address of the Friburgers, ‘they showed themselves more heated than ever in their desire that all should be killed.’

These worthy merchants, astounded at finding ecclesiastics so eager for battle, thought that the laymen would be more moderate, and went off to parley with the magistrates. ‘If there is any bloodshed,’ they said, ‘all the blame will be laid on you. Do your duty: it is yours to command; order the two parties to withdraw to their homes.’ The honour of the magistrates, who at heart desired peace, was touched, and they resolved to put down the tumult. Turning

\* Froment, *Gestes*, p. 57.

to the priests, upon whom the whole affair depended, they said to them before the people: 'You must restore peace.' But the clergy would do nothing, and indeed excited the people all the more to attack the Lutherans. The indignant Friburgers determined to frighten them. 'We pray you, sirs, not to be so high,' they said, 'for if it should come to fighting, we would rather be on their side than on yours. . . . They are very different soldiers from you, in better order and well-armed. . . . we have seen them.' Then pointing to the listening people, they continued: 'Do you think, sir priests, that the men here, who have their children, parents, and friends on the other side, wish to kill them or to be killed by them for love of you? . . . Indeed, we pray them to withdraw. And if after that you desire to attack your enemies, think what you are about; perchance, you may not have the opportunity of returning.'

The worthy Friburgers did not stop here; after speaking to the magistrates and priests, they began to harangue the people. Approaching the citizens, they spoke to them singly: 'You have sons, relations, and friends on the huguenot side; do you want to kill them, or be killed by them? We advise you to let the priests fight it out by themselves.'

Many highly approved of this remonstrance. 'We are very foolish,' they said; 'why should we get killed for the priests? . . . Let them defend themselves, if they like. Let them contend with Holy Scripture and not with the sword.' Some whom reason could not convince were seized with fear.\*

\* Roset MS. *Chron.*



The good sense of the Friburgers dissipated the charm of sacerdotal fanaticism. The natural affections, repressed for a moment, resumed their power. 'Let the affair be arranged,' was the cry from all quarters; 'Arbitrate, arbitrate.'

The magistrates, seeing the priests deserted, regained their courage. There was not a moment to be lost. The council assembled in the middle of the Molard, the ushers keeping off the crowd; the syndics were the first to protest against the spilling of blood; many influential councillors supported them, and the majority of the people seemed to declare in favour of peace. Then the premier-syndic, Nicholas du Crest, Claude Baud, and Pierre de Malbuisson, attended by several captains, advanced to treat with De la Maissonneuve and his friends. The foremost of the huguenots, seeing them approach, thought that the battle was beginning, and one of them, a prompt and energetic man, arranging a piece of artillery, began to take aim at the centre of the group, and got ready to apply the match. 'The shot would have made a terrible breach,' says Froment. This rapid movement alarmed those who were approaching; on all sides they shouted out, 'Peace is made.' At these words the gunner stopped, the soldiers drew back, the syndics came forward on one side, Baudichon and his friends on the other, and the two parties conferred together.\*

Confidence was not yet restored. It was agreed to give hostages: three notable men were given up on each side, and among the six was a canon named

\* Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 55.—Council Registers, 28th March 1533.—Roset MS. *Chron.* liv. ii. ch. 10.

Guet. Immediately the sound of the trumpet was heard in the city, and the herald proclaimed: 'Every man shall lay down his arms and return quietly home, without quarrel or dispute, under pain of being hanged; and no one shall sing song or ballad, provoking to quarrel, under pain of being whipped and banished.'

The most diverse opinions prevailed at that moment in the city. The priests and fervent disciples of Rome could find no comfort. Wishing to destroy the Reformation at any cost, they thought it very christian-like to put the reformed to death. They were particularly envenomed against the captain-general; some of them publicly called him a traitor. 'This peace vexes the christians sorely,' writes Sister Jeanne; and accordingly they were heard exclaiming: 'We ought now to *despatch them from the world*, in order to be no more frightened or vexed on their account.' 'To say the truth,' adds the devout nun, 'it would have been better than letting them live.'\*

But while some of the catholic leaders, as Wernli and Moine, returned home gloomy and discontented, hoping that the business was merely adjourned; others, both reformed and catholics, gladly recrossed the thresholds of their homes, and were welcomed with tears of joy. Wives embraced their husbands, the little children clung round their fathers, while the elder ones took off their swords. The politicians smiled as they witnessed the joy of some and the chagrin of others; they shook their heads and thought that one party or the other would break the truce as

\* La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 56.—Council Registers of 28th and 29th March.—Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 56.

soon as they fancied it would be to their interest to do so. 'It is a sham peace,' they said.\* But nothing could console certain of the monks. 'Alas!' they muttered in their convents, 'the christians would easily have discomfited and reduced the heretics to subjection, and now these wicked ones will gain the supremacy in the city.'†

On the following day (29th March) the council of sixty assembled 'to settle the strife of the day before.' The tempest was not yet entirely appeased; the catholic members of the council looked with threatening eyes on the most notable of their colleagues, Jean Philippe, François Faure, Claude Roset, and others. These were the men to be attacked, they thought, for the strength of the anticlerical movement lay with them. But for a time, reconciliation was all the fashion. They resolved to frame a compromise which would satisfy both parties; and some of the magistrates and principal citizens met to arrange a system for uniting Rome and the Gospel.‡

The Two Hundred, who were joined by many other citizens, being assembled on the 30th March, the premier-syndic first liberated the hostages and then proposed the famous project of reconciliation. The council having accepted it, he forwarded a copy to the captains of each company; and turning to the Abbot of Bonmont, who pretty regularly discharged the functions of bishop, considering the prelate's continual absence, the chief magistrate said to him: 'Mr. Vicar, I shall give you also a copy of this

\* Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 56.

† La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, pp. 55-56.

‡ Council Registers, 29th March.

decree, in order that you may take care to make your priests live properly.' All the laymen agreed that there lay the main difficulty. The sitting broke up.

Each company was immediately drawn up on its Place d'Armes; the captain stood in the centre: huguenots and mamelukes listened to this strange decree which, regulating a religious matter, was ordered by the civil authority and proclaimed by the soldiers.

'In the name of God, the Creator and Redeemer, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,' read the captain, and all bared their heads. 'In the interest of peace, it is resolved,' continued the officer with sonorous voice, 'that all anger, grudges, injuries, and ill-will between any soever of our citizens and inhabitants, as well ecclesiastic as secular, and also all battery, insult, and reproach, committed by one side or the other, be wholly pardoned.'

The listeners appeared satisfied.

'*Item.* That every citizen, of what state or condition soever he may be, live henceforward in peace, without attempting any novelty until it be generally *ordered to live otherwise.*'—'Really, here is a reform,' said the huguenots, 'but it is in the future.'

'*Item.* That no one speak against the holy Sacraments, and that in this respect every one be *left at liberty according to his conscience.*'

Liberty and conscience! what strange words. If the people of Geneva gained that, everything was gained.

'That no one,' continued the captain, 'preach without the license of the superior, the syndics, and the



council; and that *the preacher say nothing that is not proved by Holy Scripture.*'

No article caused greater satisfaction. 'Good,' said some of the reformed, 'our doctrine is that of Holy Scripture.'—'Good,' said some of the catholics, 'the superior will contrive that no heretic preaches.'

The captain added the prohibition to eat meat on Friday, to sing songs against one another, or to say 'You are a Lutheran,' 'You are a papist.' Moreover he ordered the heads of families to inform their wives and children of the decree. The catholic ladies and their boys had been sufficiently forward at the time of the battle not to be forgotten.

The captain having finished said to his company: 'Let those who desire peace and love hold up their hands and make oath before God.'

The reformers, who obtained Holy Scripture and liberty of conscience, held up their hands. The catholics seeing that the episcopal authority and fast days were left them, did the same; but in one of the companies, a huguenot who did not care for this mixture, said: 'I refuse!'—'To the Rhone with him,' exclaimed the catholics immediately; 'to the Rhone. Throw him into the Rhone without mercy, like a mad dog.'\* Nobody, however, was drowned, and next day there was a general procession through the city to return thanks to God for the peace.

The catholics triumphed. Religious liberty and the Bible seemed such strange things that they had nothing to fear from them. They learnt the contrary afterwards; but at this time the words looked like

\* Council Registers for the 30th March.—La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 59.—Gautier MS.

a decoy, that had no reality, merely intended to attract and catch the huguenots. On Palm Sunday, a very learned dominican (as it was said) come from Auxerre, was commissioned to preach the victory of Rome. The crowd was so great that the convent church could not contain it. He was conducted to the open space in front of the building, where he got up into a pulpit that had been brought out for him. Standing proudly before his congregation, the disciple of St. Dominic said: 'Here I am ready to enter into the lists with these preachers. Let my lords of Berne send as many as they like, I will undertake to confound them all.' He had a copious flow of 'big words, to the great contempt of the Word of God.'\* The huguenots, scarcely able to contain themselves, exclaimed: 'These canting knaves desire to blindfold the eyes of the simple, so that they may not see the sun which has risen on us in his brightness.'

The dominican continued hurling his thunderbolts without intermission, then suddenly the assembly became disturbed. The women screamed, the men were agitated . . . it was believed that the huguenots were sallying from the city (for the convent was in a suburb) and about to fall on the congregation. 'Shut the gates' (of the city), cried some; and the devout were still more frightened at this exclamation. Some drew their swords, others their daggers, all got ready to defend themselves. The poor monk, fancying the Lutherans were there already and about to put him to death, grew frightened, turned pale . . . 'and fell out of the pulpit in a faint.' But no huguenots

\* Gautier MS. Extracted from the petition presented to Berne by Maisonneuve and Salomon.

appeared. The congregation began to enquire into the cause of the alarm, and discovered a young hare which had been let loose among the people, and was running here and there between the women's dresses. It was a trick played by some foolish jester. There was a good deal of laughter in the city at the intrepid champions of Rome who had so heroically drawn their daggers against a leveret.\*

A ceremony of another kind, more serious and absorbing, was in preparation. It was Passion-week, and the evangelicals felt the necessity of meeting in a spirit of christian fraternity around the Lord's table. On Holy Thursday (10th April) four-score men and several women assembled in the garden at the Pré l'Evêque. First, one of them washed the feet of the others, in remembrance of the like act done by our Lord. It was not an idle imitation with them: they understood Christ's meaning: 'reminding them that no one should refuse to descend to serve his brethren and equals, however low and abject the service might be;' and they felt that 'if charity is abandoned, it is because every one takes more than he wants, and despises almost all the others.' After the washing of the feet, the holy sacrament was celebrated. These energetic men humbled themselves like little children before God, and approaching the table in sincere faith, many experienced that the presence of the Redeemer, although spiritual, is real and strengthens the inner man.

As soon as the news of this celebration became known, all the city spoke of it, and sarcasms were not

\* Council Registers from 2nd to 11th April.—Gautier MS.—Spon, *Hist. Eccl.* pp. 490–492.

spared. 'These *Jews*,' they said, 'have bitten one after another into a slice of bread and cheese, in token of peace and union . . . And thereupon the catholics laughed,' sister Jeanne informs us.\*

But the laughter was soon changed into fear. As they returned from the Pré l'Evêque, several huguenots (and some of the most dreaded were among them) walked through the streets together. A few silly gossips having caught sight of them in the distance, reported everywhere that large bodies of heretics were assembling in the squares and plotting to prevent the celebration of the mass on Easter Sunday. It being Holy Thursday, the communion was about to be administered in the churches; but the women, terrified by the tales they heard, did not dare stir out. The men grasped their arms; the priests and monks did the same; and both pastors and flocks began to celebrate the supper of peace, protected by breastplates, daggers, and clubs. All of them kept their ears on the watch; they were agitated at the least noise; but no one came to disturb them, and the communion passed off quietly.†

'It will be on Good-Friday then,' said a few of the catholics; 'the huguenots, it is well known, are preparing to make a demonstration that day in the Dominicans' church, where the monk of Auxerre is to preach.' To prevent such a mishap it was decided that the good father should preach at St. Pierre's, 'the like of which had never been seen within the memory of man, on such a day.' The canons believed them-

\* La Sœur J. de Jussieu, *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 61.

† Ibid. p. 60.



selves safe in their cathedral, as in a fortress. For more security numerous bodies of men patrolled the city; one of the chief catholics, M. de Thorens, paraded proudly up and down surrounded by a troop of bravoës. On Friday morning, priests and worshippers went armed to St. Pierre's. Some of the reformed were astonished at seeing them under arms on such a day, and reminded them of our Lord's words: *Put up thy sword in his sheath.* That means, said the priests, 'that it must be kept close *until it is time to draw it.*' Convenient interpretations are always to be found.

These good people were disquieted without a cause: there was not the least disturbance, and the preacher of Auxerre said whatever he pleased.\* But he did not feel at ease in the city of the huguenots, and Easter Day was no sooner past than he returned 'hastily into his own country.' No one dared preach after his departure, which greatly surprised devout catholics.†

The ordinance of the council had forwarded religious liberty in Geneva, but it was little more than in theory; the practice was more difficult. In the opinion of some, Geneva ought to be entirely reformed; in the opinion of others, entirely catholic: men of decision asked 'how long they would halt between two opinions?' and daring partisans repeated that the sword alone could cut the difficult knot. The premier-syndic, Nicholas du Crest, and councillor Roy started for Berne to pray the senate not to support the Reform; while the evangelicals, on the other hand, desired that it should be allowed to develope itself freely. Many had a

\* La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain*, p. 60.

† Ibid. p. 61.

fervour of mind, a sincere hunger and thirst for righteousness; their souls sought after eternal salvation; and they were as ambitious of heavenly truth as conquerors are of glory and empire. The clergy, by depriving them of their ministers, had reduced them to simple attempts at mutual edification; but they desired the full preaching of the Gospel, without which the Church pines away. 'We are suffering from want,' they said; 'we are deprived of our rights. A bold monk is perpetually shouting that he is prepared to confound all the ministers that Berne is willing to send us. . . . Well then, let us ask Berne for ministers whose learning and eloquence may reduce these insolent and prating Dominicans to silence.'

The journey of Syndic du Crest disquieted Maisonneuve. Who can tell but the respect due to the chief magistrate of the republic may induce the powerful canton of Berne to take a false step? . . . He will endeavour to prevent so great a misfortune. He communicated his intentions to the faithful Salomon, who being full of confidence in his friend, departed with him immediately on this perilous journey.\*

Du Crest and Councillor Roy, arriving at Berne on the 6th April, fancied one day they saw Maisonneuve and Salomon in the street. They stopped in surprise, eyed them both from head to foot, and looked as if petrified. . . It was really the two huguenots. The premier-syndic was exasperated, and going up to them, asked rudely, 'What are you doing here?' 'We are told that your have instructions to speak

\* Council Registers of the 2nd and 11th April. Gautier MS.—Spon, *Hist. Eccles.* I. pp. 490-492.

against us,' answered Maisonneuve: 'we are here to defend ourselves.' The next day, when the two magistrates went to the council, they were still more surprised to find the two reformed leaders in the outer hall. They hoped at least to enter the council-room alone; but no! the door was hardly open when the two huguenots went forward unceremoniously with the two magistrates, and sat down quietly at their left. Was there then a second power in Geneva, which also sent its ambassadors?

Maisonneuve was in reality an ambassador; his heart burnt for a great cause—that of the Gospel and of the new times. The truth which he represented filled him with courage: he rose first, even before the Genevan magistrate had spoken, and said with holy boldness: 'Most honoured lords, we and a great number of our fellow-citizens desire the pure Word of God to be preached in Geneva. The voice of the Gospel, so little heard in times of yore, is now resounding throughout Christendom, and we do not wish to give up hearing it. Neither banishment nor threats can reduce us to carelessness and inactivity.' And then without fearing the premier-syndic, who was listening, he continued: 'My lords, do you know to what extremity we are reduced? Our magistrates are making war upon us, and trying to drive from Geneva that Gospel which you have established in Berne. After the visit we paid you recently, they summoned us before them. . . . And this Nicholas du Crest here present has trampled our liberties under foot and spoken to us as if we were thieves. . . . Instead of answering your letters they went from house to house exhorting their partisans to take up arms. They rang

the tocsin; gathered together the canons, priests, and common people; and contrived a wicked and bloody conspiracy. . . . And why, my lords? We must (they said) cut off the heads of those who went to Berne. . . . Behold, most honoured lords, the value they attach to your citizenship! . . . O liberties of Geneva! O alliance of the League! O justice of the laws! . . . Everything is trodden under foot by priests determined to leave us for our inheritance nothing but slavery and superstition, tears, sighs, and groans. . . . A remedy must be applied, and you alone can do it, most honoured lords. A fanatical monk, who preaches against pure religion, has offered to enter the lists against every minister of the Gospel you may send us. . . . Do what he asks . . . Grant to us and our brethren one of your preachers. Obtain for him a public place where he may freely declare the Word of God. Let him combat with this dominican in a properly regulated discussion, and thus ensure the triumph of the Gospel.'

Maisonneuve knew the risk he incurred by speaking with so much frankness, and he therefore added: 'Perhaps you will also see that this just request does not prevent our returning home and living there in peace.' \*

The syndie and the Genevan councillor, who had not expected such a speech, were embarrassed. Having come as accusers, they found themselves accused. The angry looks of the Bernese councillors disturbed the magistrate of Geneva still more than the words of the protestant ambassador. The avoyer, turning to the

\* Requête de ceux de Genève.—Council Registers of 11th April, 1583. —Gautier MS.—Spon, *Hist. Eccles.*, p. 491.



syndic, asked him whether he had any answer to make. 'We have no orders on the subject, and, therefore, have nothing to say,' was his reply. 'Well then,' said the lords of Berne, 'we will send a deputation to Geneva shortly, to see what is going on there with regard to religion.'\*

The council rose. It seemed as if a favourable wind was about to blow on the evangelical ship. But a storm was preparing, which might perhaps dash it to pieces.

\* Requête de ceux de Genève.—Council Registers of 11th April, 1533.  
—Gautier MS.

## CHAPTER XVII.

SECOND ATTACK, IN WHICH THE LEADER PERISHES.

(MAY 4, 1533.)

THE Reformation of Geneva numbered in its ranks the friends, not only of evangelical truth, but of political liberty. There was both good and evil in this. The vigorous hand of the huguenots may possibly have been necessary to restrain the intrepid mamelukes; but it was to be regretted that the arms of the flesh shone beside those of the spirit. If reasoning by syllogism is bad in religious subjects, reasoning by the pike is worse still. Some partisans of the Reform gave a new version of the *Compel them to come in* of the Romish Church, by practising a little of the *Compel them to go out*. Both of them need a little indulgence. The human mind having been kept in darkness for ten centuries, required a lengthened education before it could understand that it is unholy to employ in religion any other weapons than those of free conviction.

There was another kind of hostility, pretty frequent in those times, and more conformable to the manner of our days than swords and guns—the use of ridicule. The Genevans of both schools usually began with legitimate discussions, the catholics alleging the infallibility of the pope, and the

reformed opposing them with that of the Word of God. They debated on this subject in the streets and in the convents, around the fire and even in the council. But they often passed from discussion to ridicule. One day, when the priests were walking in procession and singing aloud the prayers for the conversion of heretics, some huguenots, standing at the corner of a street, fancying a resemblance between their harsh chants and the voice of a certain thick-skinned animal, said laughingly to one another: 'Give some thistles to those noisy braying donkeys.' 'Alas!' exclaimed the nuns in their cloister, 'they make so many jests that you could not write them down in a year!' It is Sister Jeanne who records this fact, but her narrative is so full of fables that we cannot guarantee its authenticity.\*

Most of the priests were stronger in arm than in mind, and preferred a fight with swords to one with words. That devout canon and valiant knight Messire Pierre Wernli was bursting with rage. He harangued in the convents, in private houses, and even in the streets; he wished to fight and prove, halberd in hand, that supreme respect was due to the papacy. He held frequent conferences with the heads of the party, both lay and ecclesiastic, at Percival de Pesmes', at M. de Thorens', or at the vicar-episcopal's. All kept their eyes and ears open, determined to take advantage of the first opportunity to secure the triumph of their cause. They thought the time for action had come at last.

It was now the beginning of May, the date of the fair at Lyons, at that time much frequented by the

\* La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 62.

Genevans. Some of the principal huguenots hesitated, however, to go there. It seemed difficult for them to leave Geneva just at that moment, for all the indications of a storm were visible in the sky. They believed, however, they should have time to make the little journey before the crisis arrived. Some of the more daring among them posted up bills with the words: 'Let us go to the fair before the war and deliverance of Geneva.' They departed, and in certain secret meetings it was said that the huguenots who remained behind ought to be killed, and the gates shut against those who were away: thus the religion of Geneva would be saved. But in the opinion of others, it was proper that the pomps of religious worship should form a prelude to these combats of the faith.

Sunday, the 4th of May, was the feast of the Holy Windingsheet. The linen cloth, in which the body of Jesus Christ was buried, and on which (it was said) the print of his face had remained, was exhibited that day in Geneva, and on other days in ten or twelve different cities which all pretended to possess it. At the moment when the Reform was endeavouring to restore Christ's true image to the Church, such as it is found in Holy Scripture, the most ardent partisans of catholicism were found exhibiting on a sheet the features, which sixteen centuries, as they alleged, had not been able to efface. To give more importance to the feast, the vicar-general entrusted the service to Pierre Wernli, who was looked upon as one of the most important of the canons, and was at the head of the most bellicose. The congregation was large. Great fervour, internal emotion, and ardent prayers



rendered the service that day more than usually solemn. Wernli, who had put on his finest sacerdotal robes, presided over the ceremony with religious enthusiasm and swelling pride. He was fanatical but sincere. His motto was: 'Everything for the honour of God and holy Church.' Convinced of the efficacy of the sacrifice of the mass, he repeated the *introit*, chanted the offertory, consecrated the host, and went through the elevation. The sympathetic accents that rose from his heart resounded through the arches of the cathedral. 'What a fine voice!' said some; 'what a fine man! There is not such another officiator in the world, and we have not seen so fine a service in Geneva for these ten years!'<sup>\*</sup> After the mass of the Holy Windingsheet, the catholics could not doubt of the approaching triumph of the Church.

A new contest was about to begin. We do not forget the small extent of the field of battle. We are not describing the destinies of the empire of the Persians or the Romans, of the Russians or the Germans; but those of a little city, surrounded by a narrow territory. Here, everything is on a small scale; yet the combat of which we are about to speak led to the return of the prince-bishop; and if the plans formed between that ecclesiastical prince, the duke of Savoy, and the emperor himself had been carried into execution at that moment, as everything seemed to forebode, liberty and the Reformation would have perished in Geneva. Would that loss have produced no effect? Are we mistaken in thinking that the great battle which was to last during all the 16th century—a battle which the Gospel and

<sup>\*</sup> La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain*, p. 63.

liberty fought against Rome, Jesuitism, and the Inquisition, and which is undoubtedly the most important of modern times—might not have had the same issue, if this little city, so full of living faith and heroic courage, had not fought in the ranks, and imparted to protestantism the vigour necessary to conquer formidable enemies? When they hear of these petty struggles, many of the friends of liberty and the Gospel perhaps may say: ‘Let us not despise such little things. It is we whom the narrative concerns. These people were the first to fight for the precious gifts which we now enjoy in peace.’

Wernli did not intend to remain satisfied with a mass: he believed a fight was necessary. He had hardly laid aside his robes, his cross, and stole, when he thought of donning his armour: this was part of his piety. He had no trouble in persuading his brethren, for the priests were more zealous than the laymen in these disturbances.\* The first battle having proved a failure, they prepared for a second. In the Reformation of Geneva facts play as important a part as ideas. The great questions of rights, liberty, and truth were not elaborated simply in the studies of a few lawyers or divines, but were discussed around the hearths of burghers, at the meetings of evangelicals, and in the general council of the citizens, and were decided in the streets in the midst of formidable struggles. Ideas became acts; doctrines gave birth to events; theories set men’s hearts beating, armed their hands, and produced great deliverances. There may have been some evil in this mighty activity, but it was an unavoidable evil.

\* Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 55.—Gautier MS.

On the afternoon of the festival, Wernli and a great number of other ecclesiastics met in council at the vicar-episcopal's. They bitterly regretted that the good-nature of the Friburgers and the weakness of the syndics had caused the failure of their plot. They had lost the game, and must begin again. A project adjourned needs not on that account be given up. The catholics should take advantage of the time when the absence of the principal huguenots would make the victory easy.

During this discussion a few citizens of both parties were promenading near the Rhone, apparently thinking only of taking a little recreation. It was the evening of a holiday, and the setting sun poured its rays in floods of flame upon the lake. The west was on fire, the water reflected the image of the sky, and flashed with bright and flickering colours. But the citizens thought little at this moment of the beauties of nature. However great the apparent calm without, their souls were agitated by fierce passions. By degrees they entered into conversation; they spoke of religion, as was their custom; they debated with warmth, then they began to dispute and to abuse each other, and finally hands were raised and blows were struck.

The sun set; the brightness died away, all grew pale round the city, and daylight was fading into darkness. The hour, so favourable for walking, had attracted many abroad; the noise drew still more. Huguenots and mamelukes, catholics and reformed, hurried to the Molard. 'What is the matter?' they asked. The parties were already forming into two distinct groups. Every one as he arrived joined his friends; they arranged themselves in order, they soon counted

their numbers, and two bands drew up face to face. Some of the more impetuous went in front and excited the crowd. The gaoler of the episcopal prisons and his brother, both great brawlers, who handled the dagger cleverly, 'very riotous men' (says a manuscript) thorough bravoos of the 16th century, were among the most violent. Monks and priests of the lower rank mingled with the people in the square, while their superiors were in consultation at the vicar-episcopal's. They excited the crowd, and complained loudly that the Friburgers had hindered them on the 28th March from destroying the heretics, which, they held, would have been a necessary severity.

Meanwhile the two parties, though already face to face, apparently did not think of coming to blows. One Pinet, sent by the clergy 'to apply the match, began to work upon the people.' He glided from group to group, and strove to inflame the minds of the catholics. 'Who will fight along with me on behalf of his religion?' he said. Then turning towards the huguenots, he challenged them, shouting out, with an oath: 'Your creed is a rascally one, you Lutherans! If there is a man among you willing to maintain the contrary, let him come here and fight.'\* This challenge was repeated several times, but the reformed feared a disturbance. 'Peace has been made,' said they, 'do not break it.' Some of them added: 'Be on your guard, Pinet is a sad scamp.' Nobody would 'take the bait.' One huguenot, however, the impatient Ami Perrin, could not contain himself; provoked by the priests' agent, he rushed upon him and nearly killed him. Both huguenots and catholics

\* Froment, *Gestes*, p. 57.



ran between them to separate them. Peace was restored or at least seemed to be ; but a spark had been struck out, and the fire was about to be kindled.\*

A young Catholic, Marin de Versonay, agitated by the scene which he had just witnessed, left the square and hurried up the Rue du Perron. Versonay was a man of narrow mind but ardent imagination, and fanatically attached to the Romish Church, which he looked upon as the sole and exclusive source of holiness and everlasting happiness. Moreover he had an unbounded affection for his cousin Percival de Pesmes, and the profoundest respect for the sovereignty of the bishop. His ancestors had conferred great services upon Geneva. In 1476 his grandfather Aymon, councillor to the bishop John Louis of Savoy, had lent his plate to the city to quiet the Swiss, who threatened it with pillage. The young nobleman wished to do for Geneva more than his grandfather had done—he wished to destroy heresy. His wife, with whom the priests were great friends, urged him on night and day.†

The members of the episcopal council, the canons and principal priests, were all armed and waiting at Messire de Bonmont's house the issue of this skirmish. At every noise they pricked up their ears, fancying they heard the footsteps of a messenger ; but none appeared, and everything seemed to betoken that peace would not be disturbed. Pinet had withdrawn in confusion, and Perrin, notwithstanding his natural impetuosity, knew very well that the

\* Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 57.—La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 61.

† Contemporary MS.—Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 58.

reformed did not wish to take the initiative and break the public peace. Tranquillity was restored. A few citizens of both parties still remained in the Molard, but many of the catholics and huguenots had left, and to seal their concord had gone to drink together, saying that they intended to remain friends. The match had gone out.\*

Young de Versonay and the impetuous canon were going to rekindle it. The former, whose imagination had been excited, directed his steps to De Bonmont's house. He knocked violently at the gate and shouted aloud : ' Help ! help ! they are killing all good christians ! ' At the sound of these imprudent words the canons and priests caught fire ; some remained doubtful and motionless, but Pierre Wernli, ' that good knight,' immediately sprang to his feet. The service he had celebrated in the cathedral was hardly over, when he had thought of another, and said to himself that this very day the Reformation must be buried in a winding-sheet from which it should never rise again. Accordingly, after taking off his sacerdotal robes, he had put on his breast-plate and cuishes, belted his sword to his side, seized his heavy halberd, and thus armed,† had gone to the vicar-episcopal's. Immediately Wernli heard Versonay's voice, he thought the hour was come. Standing in the midst of the priests, and grasping his weapon, he invited his colleagues by a glance to follow him. Many hesitated, and then, ' burning with love of God,' says one of his greatest admirers, ' this good champion

\* Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 57.—La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 61.—Galiffe, *Notices généalogiques*, I. p. 48.

† La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain*, &c. p. 62.

of the faith, seeing that nobody got ready for the fight, lost patience, would not wait for the other churchmen, and went out first with fiery courage.\* The die was cast; the battle was about to begin, for no one was able to stop the impetuous canon.

However, three other priests, less notable but quite as violent—Bertholet, Manillier, and Servant—ran to St. Pierre's and ordered the ringers to sound the tocsin loudly and hurriedly. These men, themselves alarmed at what was told them about the riot, rang immediately, 'to the great terror of Christians,' says sister Jeanne. Over all the city swelled the majestic voice of *Clemence*, an ancient bell, well known at Geneva, which bears this inscription on the rim :

EGO VOCOR CLEMENTIA.  
AVE MARIA, GRATIA PLENA.  
PLEBEM VOCO, CONVOCO CLERUM,  
VOX MEA CUNCTORUM  
FIT TERROR DEMONIORUM.

In truth Clemence at this moment 'was calling the people and convoking the clergy,' and as for the 'demons, whom her voice was to affright,' . . . they were the reformed—at least in the eyes of the priests. The huguenots who remained in the Molard, thought that the papists meditated returning to the attack and killing them in their houses. The darkness increased the agitation caused by the dismal sounds from the belfry. 'What is the matter?' said the citizens. 'The heretics are assembling in the principal square to plunder the churches,' answered

\* La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain*, pp. 61-62.

some of the catholics. 'Let us rally on the other side, in front of the stalls,' was the reply. Some said truly that it was a false alarm; that the huguenots had gone to the river bank simply for a walk, as is everywhere customary on a Sunday evening, and that they were already returning home; but the more violent would listen to nothing; they hurried from all quarters, summoned by the tocsin, and displayed their banners. On the side of the stalls they shouted with all their might: 'Rally here, all Christians, and be of good heart in defence of holy faith.' And great was the tumult among them. It was quite pitiful to hear their cries in the streets.\* The other churchmen, who at the first moment had hesitated to follow the canon, took courage, and leaving the vicar's house, descended to the Molard.

In the priests' eyes it was a decisive moment. A great number of them, no doubt, thought only of their personal interests, but many believed that the issue of the struggle was a question of life or death for catholicism in Geneva. They shuddered when they saw those whom they termed unnatural children, turning away from the bosom of their mother's breast—the papacy. 'These curious and rebellious minds,' they said, 'imagine that they will overthrow the Church . . . but the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. . . . O bride of Christ! thou who procurest for us the chaste and everlasting embraces (*castos æternosque amplexus*) of the divine Spouse, we are thine for ever!'

Wernli had made up his mind to give his life, if

\* La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain*, pp. 67-68.



necessary, for the cause of Rome. This was not with him the hasty resolution of a moment. Seeing the progress of the Reformation, he had vowed to sacrifice everything for its destruction, and it was with this intention he now descended from the neighbourhood of St. Pierre's to the Molard. It was necessary to accomplish on the 4th May what the 28th March had been unable to do. 'Wernli desired to be the first,' says Froment, 'to support as a man of war the holy mother Church.' He was both the hero and the victim of this important day. Vainly did the people shout to him on every side that 'Peace was made;' . . . he would hear nothing. 'He was the most obstinate and the maddest of the priests.'\* Full of venom and devotion for the cause of popery, he exclaimed: 'Ho! all good christians to my aid.' Many laymen and clerks joined him, and they proceeded hurriedly towards the square. 'The canons and other churchmen were the first under the flag,' says Sister Jeanne. In a short time fifteen hundred men, 'many of them priests,' were assembled.†

During this time, other ecclesiastics were gathering in arms in the court of St. Pierre, so as to stop the huguenots who might desire to go to the scene of the tumult. Three reformers, coming from the Bourg du Four, soon arrived with hasty steps in front of the cathedral. The sacerdotal corps immediately barred the way, and the priests began to attack them. One of them was 'unfortunate enough to receive *twenty-eight* wounds at their hands, and fell to the ground.'

\* Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 58.

† La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 61.—Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, pp. 57-58.

As for the other two, 'the dogs took flight,' says the bulletin of St. Claire.\*

At this moment Wernli and his followers reached the Molard. The night was dark, the stars above gave a faint light; men appeared like shadows, and it was hard to distinguish friends from foes. Obscure and confused noises, inarticulate sounds, marks of approbation or of anger, issued from the darkness. It was like the hoarse roaring of the sea before the storm bursts forth. For a few seconds there was a dead silence, then on a sudden loud shouting. When the canon arrived, armed from head to foot, he heard the cries of the reformers, and, stirred with anger, he flourished his halberd, and pointing it in their direction, shouted out in his Friburg patois: 'Dear God! where are these Lutherans who speak ill of our law? . . . God's blood! where are they?'† With a coarse oath, he turned round to his followers, and said, 'Courage, good christians! do not spare those rascals.' One might fancy him the giant Goliath, who, with a helmet of brass upon his head, and armed with a coat of mail, came forth, spear in hand, to defy the army of Israel.‡

The warlike canon had hardly given the signal when the combat began. It was a fine spring night, everything was pale and grey; it was, as we have said, easy to make mistakes; the silence and obscurity imparted a certain solemnity to the struggle. The shadows moving about the Molard became agitated;

\* 'Ces chiens prirent la fuite.'—*Le Lévain du Calvinisme*, p. 63. Gautier MS. Council Registers of May 11.

† 'Char Dey, o sont tey ces toux Luthérians. . . . Sang Dey, o sont tey?'—Choupard MS. Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 58.

‡ 1 Samuel xvii.

they rushed upon each other, and dealt frequent blows in the darkness. One shadow ran after another, but on both sides they fought desperately and at close quarters. From time to time there was a brief gleam; sword met sword, and flashed fire. The violent Perrin and the zealous Claude Bernard were at the head of the huguenots, and struck stoutly. Among the catholics, John Rosetti and Canon Viole were those who rushed with greatest fury upon their adversaries. All four fell wounded on the spot. Others besides them were hit, and their blood flowed; but they were not noticed, and the combatants trampled the wounded under foot, until their friends, recognising them, carried them to some neighbouring house. A blow more famous than all was about to be struck; a victim more notable was about to bite the dust.

Wernli, who had remained at the top of the square, unable to see his enemies, was challenging them with all the strength of his lungs. 'Where are they?' he kept on shouting and swearing; 'Where are these Lutherans who speak ill of our law?' Some huguenots who were not in the square, but in the Rue de la Croix d'Or (all the adjoining streets were full of catholics and reformers), answered him, 'They are here.' The canon, who could not see, but who could hear, rushed halberd in hand in the direction whence the reply came. He reached his enemies, striking them with the head and the butt of his weapon, which he handled as easily as his breviary. By killing Lutherans he hoped to kill Lutheranism itself.

The huguenots whom he had attacked did not remain idle, but parried the priest's blows with their

naked swords. At last one of them, whom the long and pointed blade provoked, sprang forward, caught hold of the halberd, broke it in two and flung the pieces away. The hero of the clergy, finding himself deprived of his favourite weapon, lost not a moment; he drew his two-handed sword and rushed upon his adversaries, cutting and thrusting like a Switzer of Grandson. The huguenots, finding themselves so vigorously attacked, no longer stood upon the defensive; they fell upon the champion of the papacy. 'They charged him,' says Sister Jeanne, who adds, 'but he defended himself valiantly.' His breastplate protected his body from the neck to the waist, so that all the blows aimed at him glanced off, 'so completely and cunningly was he armed.'\* At last a man named Pierre l'Hoste, as is believed, a poor carman, impatient at the long struggle, looking upon Wernli as a soldier and not a priest, approached him, and, moving round him in search of the weak point in his armour, plunged his sword into his body. The canon staggered and fell. 'Thus was the blasphemer killed, and he lay in the square without moving hand or foot.'† The struggle occurred in front of the house of Councillor Chautemps, one of the most zealous of the evangelicals. Wernli fell on the steps. *They that take the sword shall perish with the sword.*‡ Some priests who were near, seeing their captain fall, fled each to his convent or to the cloister of St. Pierre.§

The death of the general did not, however, put an

\* La Sœur J. de Jussie, p. 63.

† Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 59.

‡ St. Matthew xxvi. 52.

§ Choupard MS.—Roset MS. *Chron.* liv. ii. ch. xvi.



end to the fight. Priests with their partisans, and huguenots, were still exchanging blows when the syndic of the guard, the head of the military department, arrived. He raised his official bâton and ordered the citizens to return to their houses. De Chapeaurouge, commander of the cavalry, zealously assisted him. 'Stop!' they both exclaimed. All their calling was useless, so great was the popular emotion, and so inflamed was their courage, says the chronicle. The syndic, advancing into the midst of the combatants, conjured them to separate; but he received a blow on the head from the hands of a priest.\* What the canon's death had not been able to do, the magistrate's wound accomplished. This incident put an end to the contest. The reformed, full of respect for the syndic, sheathed their swords and withdrew to their homes.

Some priests, however, with a few of their partisans, refused to obey. They were unwilling to fail this time, and did not intend that their project should come to nothing. They were determined to bury the Reform. Exasperated bands paraded the streets, challenging and insulting the huguenots, who refused to chastise the braggart priests. Even this forbearance did not appease the fanatics; they continued their provocations until daybreak. 'All night the christians were under arms,' says Sister Jeanne, 'seeking those wicked dogs; but it was of no good, for they were all hidden!'† When daylight began to

\* Choupard MS.—Roset MS.—*Chron.* liv. ii. ch. xvi.

† La Soeur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 63.—Council Registers of the 4th and 23rd May.

appear, the clergy and their allies, fatigued with the tumultuous night, went off to bed, and thus ended their second attack. Now they will try to obtain by intrigue and terror, what arms have failed to procure them.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

THE CANON'S DEATH MADE A WEAPON AGAINST THE REFORM.

(MAY TO JULY 1533.)

WERNLI'S death was to be fruitful in serious consequences. The priests were about to show what the violent death of an ecclesiastic might mean, and the terrible consequences it carries with it. To sacrifice the liberties of Geneva and the evangelical Reformation on his tomb, was, in their opinion, the only offering that could appease heaven.

Next morning at sunrise, a few citizens left their houses and proceeded towards the field of battle. They perceived a man, dressed like a warrior, lying on the steps of a house; a great sword lay a few paces off. They approached, stooped down and touched him . . . . . he was stark dead . . . . . it was the canon, Messire Pierre Wernli. His body had lain all night in the street, unobserved by every one. As Councillor Chautemps, a peaceable man, had remained indoors, the body had not been perceived. The cuirass bore the marks of the blows received by the champion of the priests. His garments were bloody and his features still wore a fierce look. Those who gazed upon him were moved. A canon, a chief of the Church, he who the day before had officiated with so much state at St. Pierre's, sur-

rounded by all the pomps of the service, had been struck down by the huguenots . . . and there he lay dead. Some ran off to spread the news: 'Messire Pierre lies bathed in blood near the Molard.' Canons and priests, monks and mamelukes, and even the huguenots, ran out and surrounded the dead body. 'All the city was troubled when they found the corpse.'\* The devout knelt down, and striking their breasts, exclaimed with tears: 'O blessed martyr, sacrificed to God!' According to some good catholics, he took his place in the ranks of the confessors who, like Thomas à Becket, had been put to death for honouring the holy Roman Church. This species of canonisation disgusted the huguenots: 'What!' they said, 'a priest fights with the halberd and sheds the blood of citizens—he turns soldier, and you make him a saint! Rather recognise in his death the just judgment of God.'† At that moment, there came up a woman of mean appearance, who fell shrieking on the body. She pressed it in her arms, with many sighs and groans. She was the canon's house-keeper, they said; but the manuscript which records this incident gives her a more significant name.‡

This death was a great event, and the members of the council felt the liveliest apprehensions. Wernli was not only a canon, but a Friburger, and belonged to a powerful family. What would not be the wrath of his fellow-citizens! 'Had we known of this mur-

\* Council Registers of 4th and 25th May.

† 'Justa Nemesis gloriosus ille miles fœdo ictu,' &c.—Spanheim, *Geneva restituta*, p. 60.

‡ La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 63.—Council Registers of 4th and 5th May.—Roset MS. *Chron.*



der last evening,' said the mamelukes, 'the sword would have taken vengeance on Messire Pierre's assassins, and the night would have been a night of terror and death.' Their rage would have been so great that they would have entered every house and made a general massacre. But the abler men of the party made less noise, and thought of the advantage they might derive from the catastrophe. The most extreme measures now became legitimate, and the canon's death was to result in the triumph of the pope. Even now, a few catholics assembling round the corpse, traded upon the scene, and uncovering Wernli's wounds, pointed them out to the people, and thus sought to arouse their anger. Others succeeded in preventing the gates from being opened, lest the huguenots who had crossed swords with the canon should escape. When the reformed learnt that the city was closed, although it was broad daylight, they asked if it was intended to murder them, and some immediately armed themselves and went to Baudichon de la Maisonneuve's house.\*

About nine o'clock the body was lifted up and carried into Chautemp's house, where it was placed decently on a bed. The cuirass was taken off, the stains of blood washed away; it was arrayed in the priest's canonical robes, and the devout folks knelt around it. Every moment other catholics, men and women, took the places of those who left. The same day, at five in the afternoon, an immense procession descended from St. Pierre's to do honour to this 'blessed martyr.' The priests placed the canon on a

\* Council Registers of 4th and 5th May, 1533.—La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, pp. 63-64.—Gautier MS.

showy bier, and when they came out of the house, 'the people uttered a loud cry.'\* Some of the reformed joined in the funeral train; all enmity (they thought) should perish in the presence of the dead. The body was taken into the cathedral, and buried at the foot of the great crucifix. The council, wishing to hold the balance even, imprisoned a few men who passed for the most violent of both parties.†

Five days later, a herald from Friburg and many of Wernli's relatives appeared in deep mourning, and demanded that the body should be given up to them; they also called for signal reparation. At five o'clock the same day, the body was exhumed in the presence of an immense crowd, and, wonder unheard-of! the canon stood upright, and the blood flowed from his wound as fresh as if he had been alive. 'Of a truth,' said those in the cathedral, 'this is a miracle, a testimony borne to the holy Roman faith, for the maintenance of which his body was mangled. His blood cries for revenge.'‡

But the reformed said that popery is full of such cheats (*piperies*) and idle dreams, opposed to common sense, by means of which impostors deceive the simple. They believed that when the Son of God became man, many signs of divine power had accompanied that great miracle; and that if the sun acts upon the earth, and transforms a poor grain of wheat into a magnificent ear of corn, it is very reasonable to admit that he who created the sun exercises his

\* La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Lévain du Calvinisme*, p. 64.

† Ibid.—Council Registers of 2nd July, 1533.—Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 59.

‡ La Sœur J. de Jussie, p. 65.

sovereign action here whenever he wills it, and effects transformations still more marvellous ; but they would not suffer the tricks of men to be placed in the same rank with the interventions of the supreme power of the Creator. The miracle having been confirmed by *eight hundred witnesses*, says Sister Jeanne, the body was laid in a coffin and carried to the lake, all the priests singing, while the women and some of the devout made the air re-echo with their cries and groans. The coffin was placed in a boat and taken to Friburg.\*

The priests thought the moment had now come for getting rid of the evangelicals for ever. At first, the reform had been a mere thread of water, but the thread had suddenly increased, and become like an Alpine torrent, which, if it were not checked, would overthrow the altars and sweep away crosses, images and holy water, priests and prelates. Had not an illustrious canon been attacked and carried away by this devastating flood? 'Now,' said the priests, 'must be accomplished what our Lord told the apostles : He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one. If we do not crush these accursed Lutherans now, they will never cease to trouble the churches, to plunder, beat and kill. . . . Let us sell everything, even our wallets, to procure spears and swords.'† They set the example ; they never went out except well supplied with arms under their frocks. The sisters of St. Claire and all the devout women of Geneva exclaimed with

\* Council Registers of 9th May.—La Sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, pp. 64–66.—Gautier MS.—Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 59.

† *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 66.

delight on seeing the clergy so resolved : ‘Ah, if the clerks were not so stout-hearted, these ravening wolves would exterminate us.’\* But the more reasonable of the men saw that the clubs of the priests would not suffice alone. ‘The hour is come,’ said they at Geneva and Friburg, at Chambery, and wherever Rome had faithful followers ; ‘the bishop must return to Geneva, and resume his former authority.’ A deputation started from Friburg for Arbois to entreat Pierre de la Baume to return to his episcopal city.

Since the death of Besançon Hugues, the bishop had taken no steps to recover his power. Wounded by what had occurred in his principality, he kept his vexation to himself, made up his mind to remain quiet, and sought consolation at Arbois in good living. ‘I have received your capons,’ he wrote, ‘send me some fish. I have been enjoying myself, and am much better supplied with provisions here than at Geneva.’ He was at heart neither wicked nor cruel ; he had taste, education, and talent, and his conversation abounded in wit. But he had two passions—the table and money, besides a weak and selfish temper which made him incline one time to the duke, another to Geneva, and appear servile or tyrannical according as he hoped to obtain anything by baseness or by despotism. The Genevans, and particularly the huguenots, knew him well. ‘He wants to ride *one* and lead the *other*,’ said Robert Vandel, ‘and does nothing except for his own advantage.’

When the Friburgers arrived at Arbois, they

\* *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 66.



drew him from his stupid tranquillity, disturbed his feasting, and firmly represented to him that they wanted to know whether he desired to maintain catholicism in Geneva, or to let it perish. They even attacked him with personal arguments, which they knew must have great force for him. ‘Return to your city, my lord,’ they said, ‘to recover your lost authority, and protect your threatened rents.’ But La Baume was too timid, and would willingly have lived anywhere except in his own diocese and principality. He defended his absenteeism in a singular manner. ‘Many of these heretics have uttered great threats against me,’ he said; ‘they will kill me like poor Wernli.’\* A mightier voice than that of Friburg now made itself heard.

The condition of Geneva was known in all catholic countries. Men were uneasy everywhere; even Pope Clement VII. felt anxious. He did not admire those ecclesiastics who, following the example of Leo X., neglected business for pleasure. In some places the catholics imagined that if the Reform were crushed in Geneva, the recoil would act on the Reformation in general; that the other protestant nations would feel its effects, and that such a defeat would be the beginning of the end. Representations to this effect reached the pope from every side, and he, being a skilful politician and having the saving of the Roman court at heart, wrote to the bishop: ‘I command you to proceed to Geneva immediately you receive this bull, under pain of excommunication. Is it not singular that you pass your life in a foreign province

\* Sordet, *Mémoires d'Archéologie*, ii. p. 19.—Council Registers, May 19.—Gautier MS.

as if you were not the pastor of that city? You, by your absence, are the cause of all the misfortunes with which it is afflicted. . . . Go, speak, act . . . defend the flock which Jesus Christ and the holy see have entrusted to you, and rescue your sheep from the ravening wolf that is preparing to devour them.’\*

The poor bishop, when he read the bull, was seized with the most violent emotion. He saw himself between two dangers almost equally great: the pope who threatened him with excommunication, and the huguenots who threatened him with death. What was to be done? He was urged on both sides. At last he formed an heroic decision and determined to obey the pope. He will leave Arbois and the pleasant life he had led there, with all its earthly advantages, and go to that terrible city which appears to him inhabited by wild beasts thirsting for his blood. ‘Only you must obtain a safe-conduct for me from Messieurs of Geneva,’ he said to the Friburg ambassadors, who were greatly surprised at having to ask a safe-conduct for a prince who desired to visit his principality, for a bishop who desired to enter his diocese. However, they promised everything.

Wernli’s death had not only enraged the enemies of the Reformation, but had weakened its friends and occasioned a reaction in Geneva favourable to catholicism. The syndics and council now leant decidedly that way, and the return of the bishop seemed to them the only means of restoring order. ‘The bishop does not need a safe-conduct,’ they said; ‘only let him come. If anybody threatens him, we will punish him so severely, that Monseigneur shall

\* *Mémoires pour les Diocèses de Genève*, &c. par le curé Besson, p. 62.

have cause to be satisfied.'—'Let him come back, let him come back,' was the general cry except among the pious evangelicals and the proud huguenots. The emancipation had hardly begun, when a strong counter-revolution threatened to stifle it. On the 26th May the council elected Domaine Franc, Stephen d'Adda, and Bon Officher to go and humbly urge their bishop and prince to return. Thus Geneva herself was preparing to bury its Reformation and its liberty.

Other Genevans had arrived at Arbois before the deputies from the council. The principal mameluke chiefs, whether banished or emigrant, who found the bread of exile bitter, had started for Arbois as soon as they had heard of the canon's death. Full of that exasperation and agitated by those dreams which self-exiled and banished men ordinarily have, they endeavoured to make the bishop share their hopes and hatred. 'Nothing is juster and easier,' they said, 'than to put the leading huguenots into prison, on suspicion of being concerned in the attack upon Wernli. They will be executed, or if the people oppose, they can be transported suddenly to some castle in Savoy, as Lévrier was formerly, and then we can do our pleasure on them. After that nothing will be able to disturb the holy union of Geneva with Savoy and the pope.' But Pierre de la Baume had already recovered a little from the heroic resolution he had formed after reading the papal brief. The violent language of the mamelukes aroused all his terrors. 'The Genevans,' he said, 'are proud, independent, and fond of tumult; at the least word that displeases them, they fly to arms. No . . . afraid

as I am, I dare not go to Geneva.' 'Do not fear, we will accompany you,' answered the mamelukes. 'The Friburgers on their part will provide you with a guard; the Genevan catholics, who are ten to one, will do the same; the duke is resolved to support you. . . . It is impossible that we should not crush the rebels.' The calculation was correct and the argument unanswerable. Pierre de la Baume, finding himself summoned by the pope, and surrounded with spears and spearmen, horses and chariots, again resumed an heroic courage, and almost made up his mind to appear in the city of the huguenots.

Just at this moment the Genevan deputies arrived, and the bishop-prince showed at first a very courteous humour, and replied with an amiable air that he would return to Geneva *in a month*. Always uneasy, he still tried to procrastinate. So many things may happen in a month—perhaps, finally, he may never return to his episcopal city. 'I regard you as my well-beloved subjects,' he said, 'and desire to appear as your true and good prince.' Stephen d'Adda, a decided member of the opposition, placed but little trust in these fine words. In reality they were playing a little comedy at the priory of Arbois: the bishop was afraid to go, and one or two of the deputies preferred that he should not come.\*

Will he go or not? No one could tell. There were certain moments when La Baume felt inclined to cross the Jura, and then all of a sudden he felt as if *nailed* to his priory of Arbois. Never was it more difficult to arrive at a decision—it was like a night-

\* Council Registers of 21st May, 2nd and 22nd June.—Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 62.—Gautier MS.



mare. His friends began to deliberate; they quite agreed with him that if he desired simply to re-establish his residence in the episcopal city, it would be better for him not to go there at all. He would always have to begin again with the independence of the huguenots and the heresy of the reformed, with alarms and riots. The evil would even be worse than before, for the cause of liberty and reform had made great progress since the bishop had left Geneva. He is compelled, therefore, to gain two victories if he returns: first, he must trample under foot the franchises of the people and get rid of the huguenots; and, second, he must silence the evangelical teaching and expel the reformers and their adherents. The prince-bishop and his imprudent advisers were convinced that a *coup d'état*, and (if we may use the term) a *coup d'église*, were the only remedies for the critical and almost desperate position of affairs. Geneva was to go back to the superstitions and servility of the middle ages. It was necessary to extinguish the double torch of political independence and christian truth which a divine hand had kindled, and so put Christendom beyond the reach of these treacherous lights. But the timid La Baume shrank with alarm from such a herculean task; he knew his own weakness, and felt the enterprise would be too arduous for him.

Meantime the Friburg ambassadors in Geneva were preparing the way for him. They demanded aloud, what he proposed to do in secret. Being admitted to the Council on the 23rd May, they said: 'We accuse all who were in the Molard at the time of Wernli's death, including the syndic of the guard

and the commander of the cavalry.' They spoke haughtily, and required immediate satisfaction. A whole section of the population—the most innocent in this affair, even the party which had been attacked—was to be criminally prosecuted! It was a monstrous demand. However, the Friburgers spoke loud, and many of the huguenots were dejected. The Council, being divided and intimidated, made answer at last that they would authorise the lieutenant and the procurator-fiscal 'to arrest all whom Messieurs of Friburg accused.' Thus the plot was in a fair way: liberty and Reform had, however, a moment's respite.\*

Two ambassadors from Berne, Councillor Sebastian de Diesbach and Banneret John de Weingarten, arrived at Geneva, and had conferences with the men of both parties. Their ideas gradually became clearer, and truth sprang out of the conflict of opinions. They saw that this position of affairs, which seemed an inextricable chaos, had one possible solution, namely, liberty. 'We have seen and heard everything,' said Diesbach; 'the only means of enjoying peace is to *permit every one to follow the movements of his conscience, so that no one be constrained*.'† Let the mass and feast-days and images remain for those who like them; but let the preaching of the Gospel be granted to those who desire it, and let one of the seven parish churches be assigned them for that purpose. Let no one be ridiculed for going to mass.

\* Council Registers of 22nd May, 1533.

† 'Permettre à chacun de suivre les mouvements de sa conscience, en telle sorte que personne ne soit contraint.'—Council Registers, 27th May.

*Let every one abide in his own free-will and choice.\**  
 . . . Moreover, as the Old and New Testaments are the foundation of our faith, and as those who follow the Gospel cannot exist without reading them, let the booksellers be permitted to sell publicly the Holy Scriptures and any other books of piety.' Thus 'liberty for all' was the great salutary principle then proclaimed in Geneva. This theory, which gives honour to God and independence to man, was not generally admitted until two or three hundred years later. But we take note of the epoch when the right was first proclaimed. It is sometimes asserted that the idea of liberty for all only appeared in the 18th century, and that it was put forward for the first time by the free-thinkers of England, France, and Holland. It is not so: religious as well as political liberty asserted their just and holy claims at Geneva more than three centuries ago. Switzerland and the Reformation are the first in the field. These principles were so simple and so true that the Council was convinced; in the face, however, of formidable adversaries, they feared their own weakness. The syndics replied to the Messieurs of Berne: 'Stay with us to help us!' The 27th of May, 1533, deserves a mark of honour in the annals of religious liberty.

\* 'Que chacun demeure en sa volonté et en son franc arbitre.'—Council Registers, 27th May.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## CATASTROPHE.

(BEGINNING OF JULY, 1533.)

WHILE these fine liberal theories were being proclaimed at the hôtel de ville and hailed with joy by noble minds, some enemies of the Reform maintained that they were only got up for the occasion, because the reformed were not yet the strongest party, and the bulk of the people, who looked upon them as mere trash, was occupied with other things. The report grew stronger every day that the bishop had made up his mind at last, that his resolution was not to be shaken, and that in obedience to the pope he was about to return to Geneva. The liberty so lately proclaimed was, therefore, seriously endangered.

Every preparation was made for the reception of the prince, whose approaching arrival began to turn people's heads, as usually happens in such a case. Priests, mamelukes, and ducal partisans believed that the hour of their triumph was at hand, and that independence and Reform would be effectually buried. Every man who owned a horse had him dressed, as no one was permitted to go and meet the bishop on foot.\* The trumpeters rehearsed, the artillerymen got out their guns. Jacques de Malbuisson, one of

\* 'Pedestris benda.'—Council Registers of 22nd and 30th June.



the chiefs of the catholic party, thinking that there was nothing too fine for a bishop and prince, especially for one who was bringing to the city, as a token of welcome, submission to the pope in religious matters, and to an ecclesiastical sovereign in temporal matters, hung the walls of the episcopal palace with beautiful tapestry, covered the tables and floors with silk and woollen cloth, and filled the rooms with rich furniture. Pierre de la Baume had appointed him quartermaster, and the good catholic intended that the beauty of the decorations should make the Genevans comprehend the greatness of their prince.

If a servile crowd was preparing to sacrifice to a priest the liberties of the people and the Word of God, those who esteemed these treasures far above all others, anticipated with sorrow that all the old vexations were about to be revived. The Two Hundred were assembled: one proud huguenot, jealous of the political liberties, could not contain himself, and rising in the Council, said: ‘There is a report that the mamelukes who deserted the city some seven years ago are to escort the bishop and return with him: I ask if it is true?’ Instantly the storm broke out. Some said ‘Yes!’ others ‘No!’ The debate grew warm; they provoked and abused each other, gave one another the lie, and used very irritating language.\* At last the huguenots conquered, and the Two Hundred ordered that the mamelukes should not be allowed to enter, for fear that there should be discord instead of harmony in the city.

The syndics foresaw that such a resolution would probably excite confusion in the procession accom-

\* ‘Valde irritatoria.’—Council Registers of 22nd and 30th June.

panying the bishop; and as they wished to avoid all disputes, they sought an opportunity for bringing men's minds together. Assembling the leaders of the opposing parties, they entreated them, as a sign of peace, to dine together. Such a banquet, they thought, would reconcile factions and dissipate the fears of the prelate. It was an *argumentum ad hominem*. How could Pierre de la Baume be afraid of men who drank together? Libations were indeed copiously poured out in honour of concord, for the Genevans were always ready in this respect; but the convictions of the two parties remained the same. Wine had no power to change either the champions of the pope or of the people, neither the Guelphs nor the Ghibelines.\*

On Tuesday, 1st of July, the prince-bishop descended the Jura, attended by his chancellors, the president De Gevigny and many of the nobility, meditating the counter-revolution he hoped to bring about. The Friburg deputies, 'knowing the prelate's timid humour,'† went to meet him at Gex, in order to protect his entrance. They turned back with him and drew near the city. This event, which filled the catholics with joy, was a great trouble to the proud huguenots and pious evangelicals, and nearly broke their hearts. The procession seemed to them like a funeral train. Were independence, liberty, the growing Reform—those inestimable riches which are the life of man—to be carried like a dead body to the grave? Were those bells, just beginning to ring, tolling a funeral knell? Everything seemed to point that way.

\* Council Registers of 22nd and 30th June. Gautier MS.

† Mémoires du diocèse de Genève, par le curé Besson, p. 63.

Just as the brilliant escort that was riding out to meet the bishop crossed the bridge over the Rhone, a troop of about fourscore catholics appeared, all carrying arquebuses. The premier syndic, who was watching them with uneasy look, ordered them to return. 'We are going to our prince,' answered they with spirit. The magistrates and their escort lost sight of them for a few moments, but the troop was again visible when the procession got out of the city. 'They are the most violent of the party,' said some of the syndic's followers. 'They will play us some scurvy trick.' A second time the syndic ordered them to return, and a second time they answered, 'We are going to our prince,' and continued their way.

The cortège having proceeded half a league from the city, waited for the bishop, who came in sight about four in the afternoon. By his side were the magistrates of Friburg, and behind him the chiefs of the mamelukes, banished from Geneva but proud of braving those who had expelled them. The intimidated syndics dared not forbid their entrance into the city. Nor was this all: the fourscore arquebusiers surrounded the prelate, assuming the duty of a body-guard. The bells rang out, the artillery roared, and the friends of the clergy shouted repeated *vivats*. The throne was regaining strength; the majesty of the prince enhanced its splendour, and His Highness inspired respect in all who saw him.\*

These bursts of joy soon came to an end. The bishop had hardly entered the city, when its appearance changed. New faces were seen everywhere—

\* Council Registers of 1st, 2nd, and 3rd July. Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 61. Gautier MS.

faces which seemed to breathe of nothing but revenge. At night conferences were held at the palace, among the canons and the other partisans of despotic rule. Everyone talked about the horrible resolutions come to in these meetings—it was all the same whether the resolutions were true or fictitious. Many of the reformed were exceedingly distressed. ‘The heretics felt great contrition,’ says Sister Jeanne, ‘for they knew full well that the bishop brought no good to them, but would injure them as much as he could.’\*

The prelate was firmly resolved to have recourse, if necessary, to force, banishment, and death. But his character and interests inclined him also to accomplish peacefully, if he could, the great revolution he so strongly desired. He wished to act in such a way that appearances at least should be on his side.

Desiring to give his restoration the double sanction of religion and policy, the bishop ordered a grand procession for Thursday, 3rd July, after which a general council of the people should be held. The procession took place: canons, priests, and friars, walking in order, sang or chanted their litanies with great fervour, and prayed that God and the Virgin would be pleased to preserve the holy Roman Catholic Church in Geneva. When the singing was over, the general council was held. The refugees, who had forgotten nothing and learnt nothing, would have preferred a prompt and vigorous repression to this liberal meeting; but the bishop was unwilling to begin by imprisoning citizens. Besides, the impatient exiles would lose nothing by waiting.†

\* La sœur Jeanne de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 67. Gautier MS.

† Council Registers of 2nd and 3rd July, 1533. La sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 67. Gautier MS.



All the bishop's partisans proceeded proud and joyful to the council of the people; the magistrates with uneasiness, and a few huguenots with sad and suffering looks. As soon as the assembly was formed, the prelate appeared, attended by his nobles. He was determined to claim full sovereign power in Geneva, and to take it by force if it were disputed. Two great principles—the good pleasure of the prince and the constitutions of the people—met face to face on the 3rd of July, in the general council of Geneva. La Baume had taken his precautions; he had brought several distinguished men with him from Franche Comté, and among them the bailiff of Dôle, a learned and eloquent magistrate. This orator, imagining to win the Genevans by flattering and flowery language, delivered a very fine oration; but his Burgundian eloquence produced no great effect upon the huguenots. After him the prince-bishop came forward, and, speaking with a fine clear voice and in very intelligible language, he asked the syndics and the people whether they recognised him for their prince and lord. The question was skilfully put. If they answered *No*, they made themselves rebels, and severe measures became lawful; while, if they answered *Yes*, they surrendered to the prelate, and all was over with liberty and the Gospel. The magistrates, who were careful not to fall into a trap, saw that it was necessary to make a distinction. Convinced that they held their charters, franchises, and legislation from God quite as much as the prince did his power, they made a reserve. ‘Certainly, my lord,’ they replied, ‘we regard you as our prince, and are ready to obey you; *but in adopting for guide our liberties, customs,*

*and franchises, written and unwritten, which we beg you to respect, as you promised to do a long while ago.’\**

The embarrassed bishop-prince thought it essential not to open up the delicate question of the constitution he had ratified, and, letting alone for the moment all that concerned his temporal power, he spoke only as a bishop, and delivered to the Genevans a devout exhortation on the salvation of their souls. In reality, the great object of his terror was the Reformation; the great desire of his heart was the triumph of the papacy. ‘Have the fear of God before your eyes,’ he said, ‘and keep the commandments of holy Church.’ He knew full well that ‘holy Church’ would recommend the people to recognise his power without any restriction. He pronounced these words ‘in so devout and humble a manner that everybody wept, and the general council broke up without dispute or tumult, for which God be praised.’†

The Genevans were not, however, ready to bend their necks to receive the yoke the bishop presented to them. The various members of the assembly had hardly dispersed before the agitation broke out. Huguenots and independent catholics declared boldly and with one accord that they would maintain the constitution; the courtiers and mamelukes alone supported the absolute privileges of the prelate. ‘No despotic power,’ said one party. ‘No resistance to the orders of our prince,’ said the other. Offended at the new pretensions of the bishop, the citizens resolved to oppose him with the antique monuments of their liberty. There was a vaulted chamber in

\* Council Registers of 3rd July, 1533.

† La sœur J. de Jussie, *Le Levain*, p. 68.

the hôtel de ville called the *Grotto*, in which the venerable charters of the Genevan people were enclosed under many bolts and bars. Not suffering themselves to be disturbed by the arbitrariness of the bishop, by the eloquence of his orators, or the terrible bands of Friburg and Turin, the citizens determined to consult the sacred documents of their franchises. The syndics proceeded to the Grotto; the rusty bolts yielded to the stout arms of their officers; they took out the noble parchments of their ancestors, and all eyes were eagerly turned upon the title-deeds in which were inscribed the duties, rights, and liberties of the peoplè. The roll was placed upon the table; it was unfolded, and, while the others listened, one of the magistrates read the words written therein. ‘In the name of the holy, perfect, and undivided Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.’ Could the bishop trample under foot a charter which reposed on so sacred a foundation? The magistrate continued his examination. This document, drawn up by Bishop Adhemar in 1387, contained (to use its own words) ‘the liberties, franchises, and immunities which the citizens of Geneva have enjoyed so long that the memory of man runneth not to the contrary.’ The Genevans were moved, and passing the parchment from hand to hand, read certain portions of it, and swore to defend their rights.\*

The syndics having no doubt that these old documents would be received by the bishop with the profoundest respect, quitted the hôtel de ville, carrying their venerable charters with them, which they

\* ‘Senatus, sua libertate subnixus, jus suum strenue tuetur.’—Spanheim, *Geneva restituta*, p. 62.

laid before the prelate. They pointed out to him the immunities that were secured to them, and withdrew full of hope. But Pierre de la Baume did not care the least for these old papers, and would not give himself the trouble to decipher such disagreeable documents: he was in a hurry to see them restored to the cellar where they had slept so long. He intended to govern after a more modern fashion. The Reformation, on the other hand, was about to be accomplished by maintaining, in opposition to episcopal usurpation, the most lawful rights of the most ancient liberty.\*

The bishop no longer hesitated. When he had asked the general council to recognise his sovereignty, the magistrates had replied by limiting it according to the constitutions of the people. It was necessary therefore to renounce all idea of reigning with mildness, and to govern by force. Pierre de la Baume was not the first bishop excluded from his episcopal city, who had reentered it with thoughts of violence. Tales of unheard-of cruelties had been imprinted on the memory of the people. In the tenth century, the bishop of Cambray having been driven from his city by the burgesses who were exasperated against him, had returned with foreign soldiers; and these mercenaries, the ministers of his revenge, had pursued the citizens even into the churches, killing some, cutting off the hands and feet of others, putting out the eyes of some, and branding many on the forehead with a red-hot iron.† About two centuries later,

\* ‘Libertates, franchises, immunitates, usus, et consuetudines civitatis Gebennensis.’—*Mémoires d’Archéologie de la Soc. d’Hist. de Genève*, tome ii. p. 312. Council Registers of 4th July, 1533.

† ‘Alios interfecerunt, alios truncatis manibus et pedibus demembraverunt; quibusdam vero oculos fodiebant, quibusdam frontes ferro ardente notabant.’—*Scriptur. gallic. et franc.*, viii. p. 281.



another bishop also returning forcibly into his city, his followers had seized one of the most respected and wealthy citizens, notwithstanding the promise to spare his life, and had fastened him by the feet to the tail of a horse, which they forced into a gallop.\* The bishop of Geneva did not purpose imitating these episcopal proceedings; manners, though rude, were softened; he meant to content himself with less. He would have the principal supporters of the Reformation and of Geneva seized, and would get rid of them simply by the sword—either in Geneva, as in the case of Berthelier, or in some lonely castle, as in the case of Levrier. Then the prince-bishop would exercise, without control and in his own way, that sovereignty which appeared to him absolutely necessary in order to stifle the protestantism of some and the independence of others.

Freed from the importunate antiquarians who put their trust in dusty charters, the bishop began to prepare for the execution of his designs. He counted his forces and felt sure of victory. In the first place there was the Council, which, being mostly catholic, supported him at heart; then there were the priests and their adherents; then the Friburgers; then the banished mamelukes, and finally a certain class of people, skilful in the use of the arquebuse, ‘and who would handle it well,’ said the bishop. The total of his partisans being thus reckoned, the bishop enquired who were the huguenot chiefs he ought to get rid of. It is hardly probable that La Baume did this alone or simply aided by one of his secretaries or officers

\* ‘Ad equi caudam pedibus alligatus . . . vir dives et probus.’—G. de Noviguto, *Op.* p. 510.

of justice. Weakness was one of the most marked features of his character; he had no energy, although he sometimes pretended the contrary. But those around him made up for it. The proscription that he was about to carry into execution was essentially due to the encouragements and solicitations of the enemies of the Reformation and of independence. 'Finding himself strong and powerful,' says a contemporary, 'both on the part of the Friburgers and of the enemies of God and the city (namely, the mamelukes) who were now within the walls, the bishop desired to exercise his tyranny.\* Some of his friends shrank from such severity, and would have desired to divert him from it; but the most violent men prevailed. 'My lord,' they said, 'must exercise his power against certain citizens and burgesses, and by this means extirpate and eradicate the Lutheran sect and heresy.'†

The proscribed were selected indifferently from among the evangelicals and huguenots. One of the first pointed at was Chautemps. He was not only a heretic, but his children had been trained up in heresy, and he had kept for a long time in his house Olivetan, the translator of the Bible, who had dared reprimand a dominican preacher in full church. Aimé Levet came next; at his house the religious meetings were most frequently held. Pierre Vandel—youngest son of that Claude, whom twenty years before Bishop John of Savoy had cast into prison‡—a man of resolute character, readily putting himself in the

\* Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 61.

† Ibid.

‡ Vol. i. p. 73.

foreground, was joined with the other two. Ami Perrin did not belong to the evangelicals properly so called, but he had been the chief of the four huguenots whose zeal for controversy had proved so embarrassing to the vicar of the Madeleine, and passed for the boldest of all the band. Others were afterwards pointed out : Jean Pecolat, an ill-sounding name in episcopal ears ; Domaine d'Arlod, Jean Veillard, Anthonin Derbey, Henry Doulens, Jacques Fichet, Claude de Genève, and Philibert de Compey, a nobleman in high esteem. Although a Savoyard and of gentle birth, Philibert was huguenot at heart ; the count of Genevois took advantage of the opportunity to confiscate all his lands and lordships, 'and the poor pervert was deprived of his property,' says a contemporary. There were still a few more whose arrest was determined on, and among them Pasta and Rozetta.\* The bishop and his friends, all full of zeal, hoped to catch other citizens after these ; † but they thought it prudent not to do everything at once. If the first attempt succeeded, they would follow it up by a second, and would lay their hands upon such citizens as they had not thought of at first. 'I have proscribed all those whom I can remember ; those whom I have forgotten I will proscribe as they recur to my mind.' This saying of a great master in the art, found its application in Geneva.‡

The bishop, having ended his first task, began to

\* Their names are given by Froment in his *Gestes de Genève*, pp. 61-62.

† Ibid.

‡ See Plutarch's *Life of Sylla*. Council Registers of 5th July.

consider how he could lay hold of the proscribed, which was no easy matter. The most natural way would have been to capture each of them in his own house ; but he feared, that if he went to work in that fashion, some would hide themselves, others would escape, and others would be rescued in the streets. The alarm would spread in a moment, and the daring huguenots would entrench themselves in Baudichon de la Maisonneuve's house. Above all, Pierre de la Baume was wanting in frankness ; he excelled, whenever he pleased, in appearing amiable to those whom he hated. He resolved to give them an invitation, and to hold out his hand graciously to the men whose death he was plotting. He will invite them to his palace, 'trusting in his faith,' but without keeping it.\* He will thus take them all by one cast of the net, then he will tie the knot, and the poor wretches shall leave the saloons of the palace only to descend to its dungeons. It was thought an excellent stratagem, and preparations were made for carrying it out.

The next day, July 5th, the bishop's officers called on the citizens entered in the black list, and in his name gave them an invitation, which must have appeared to them either a great honour or a treacherous snare. If any of them raised objections, the messengers assured them, in the prelate's name, that no harm would come to them. Some through candour, others from ignorance, and others also from rashness, proceeded to the episcopal palace. They had put on their finest suits and wore their swords. What could the bishop want with them ? . . . Probably to obtain

\* Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 61.



some concessions, and they were firmly decided not to make any.

Others, who were more clear-sighted or more prudent, took to flight. The clerical riots which had preceded the bishop's coming, the unsatisfactory company by which he was surrounded, and the demands he had made—all combined to give food for thought to minds possessed of any discernment. Women, more keen or more timid, generally see clearer in such cases than men: their conjugal love takes the alarm. It would appear that Claudine Levet and Jaquéma Chautemps felt all the tender solicitude of their sex, and conjured their husbands not to place themselves in the cruel hands of the bishop, and to quit their homes, their children, and their country which they could now serve better abroad. These two excellent christians were among the number of those who escaped. Maisonneuve, against whom the mamelukes were much irritated, set out for Berne, full of indignation against the bishop's tyranny. To this city, next to God, he always looked for deliverance. Several others also quitted Geneva.\*

Meantime Perrin, D'Arlod, Vandel, and their friends proceeded to the palace. The gates opened before them and they entered my lord's antechambers. But they had hardly arrived, reckoning on the gracious audience that had been promised them, when they were seized, heavily fettered, and led away to the episcopal prison.† The impetuous Perrin

\* Council Registers of 5th July. La Sœur Jeanne de Jussie, *Le Levain du Calvinisme*, p. 64. Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, pp. 61, 62.

† Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 62.

and the courageous Vandel were compelled to yield to force. The bishop's officers took them down into the dungeons, and as if cords, iron doors, and bolts were not enough, their feet were set in the stocks and their hands were manacled.\*

When the news was told the prince-prelate, it was the pleasantest tidings he had ever received. He breathed again, and yet he was not entirely satisfied: he wanted some prisoners whom he had especially set his heart upon—particularly Levet and Chautemps. But if the husbands had disappeared, their wives might suffer for them. Pierre de la Baume ordered Jaquéma Chautemps to be seized, but Claudine Levet remained at liberty. Claudine was a pious christian woman, firm in faith but of gentle character, and she was spared; but Jaquéma, who it will be remembered was taught by Olivetan, possessed perhaps some of that courageous decision which was found in Calvin's cousin and in Calvin himself. Claudine was the woman of the New Testament; Jaquéma seems rather to remind us of the heroines of the Old. It is to be regretted that we have not the same information about her as about Claudine. At all events she paid for her husband. The delicate woman, the wife of one of the chief persons in the city, accustomed to the comforts of life, used to the company of one of the most original French writers of the day, the tutor to her children, was shut up in a narrow cell, and treated roughly like a conspirator. Ancient and modern times have witnessed more than one instance of conjugal devotion. Many wives, seeing

\* Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 62.

their husbands threatened with a cruel death, have been able to say to them :

. . . . . Et quel autre que moi  
A le droit d'y prétendre et de mourir pour toi ?\*

The Reformation also has furnished many similar examples.

As part of the huguenot leaders were now in prison, the bishop and his confidants deliberated what should be done with them. It was quite out of the question to put them to death publicly in Geneva, like Berthelier. The simplest way would be to behead them secretly in their dungeons; but that would be known immediately, and would create terrible excitement. 'They durst not kill them in the city for fear of the people.'† The bishop's councillors proposed to send them out of Geneva in a boat by night, and convey them either to Friburg, which was calling for victims to avenge Wernli's death, or to the castle of Chillon, where Bonivard was shut up, or to Jussy near Mount Voiron, or lastly to the strong castle of Gaillard at the foot of the Salève, 'and there do as they pleased with them.'‡ They decided on the last plan, and orders were given for carrying it out.

Thus everything proceeded to the bishop's satisfaction. As some of the principal huguenots were about to be sent out of Geneva, it became necessary 'to catch other citizens after them and serve them the same,' that is, carry them also out of the city; for the fear of the people continually pursued the

\* . . . . Who besides me  
Can claim the right to die for thee?—*Alceste*.

† Froment, *Gestes de Genève*, p. 62.

‡ 'Et illec en faire à leur plaisir.'—*Ibid*.

bishop. He was planning how to continue the work he had undertaken, when news was brought him which greatly troubled him.

One of his agents, commissioned by him to take note of everything that occurred in the city, came and told him that not only Baudichon de la Maisonneuve had escaped, but that he had gone to Berne to demand help. . . What a check! what danger! If the fugitive brings back the Bernese, they will undertake the defence of heresy . . . it will triumph. The harder the blow which La Baume desired to strike, the more dangerous would it be if it failed. He was therefore in great alarm and in a great passion also. He ordered his officers to pursue those who had escaped, to take horses so as to catch them up, and to bring them back bound to prison where their friends awaited them. But he did not rest satisfied with sending after the fugitives such persons as were under his own orders, he wanted others to track them down, to catch them in the rear or in front: this induced him to make a very extraordinary demand.

As soon as the syndics had heard of the arrest of some of the most notable of the citizens, they had summoned the council. Astounded at the tyrannical act, and alarmed for the future of the republic, they deliberated what was to be done. Should they abandon their fellow-citizens to the illegal vengeance of the bishop, or should they revolt against their prince? They were plunged into silent stupor when a messenger from the bishop appeared. No doubt he had come to give some explanation, to make an excuse, and perhaps to declare that the bishop would withdraw his fatal decree! No such thing: the council



soon learnt that he was charged with an extraordinary message.

The episcopal messenger, having made the customary salutations, said : ‘ My lord has decided to send his officers beyond the frontiers to take certain *criminals* (this was the term he applied to those noble citizens). Our very reverend prince therefore requires the council to lend him some of the city officers to accompany his own and pursue the fugitives in the territory of Savoy.’ This was too much. De la Baume required the magistrates of Geneva to employ in oppressing citizens the power they had received to defend them. Such an audacious proposition disgusted the syndics; they did not hesitate to refuse his demand; desiring, however, to keep on good terms with him to the last, they gave a specious motive for their refusal. ‘ Pray pardon us,’ they answered the bishop, ‘ if we cannot do it; we should be afraid lest the duke, whose territories our officers would have to enter, should be angry with us for violating the treaties.’ This refusal threw him into a great passion. He believed, perhaps not without reason, that the duke of Savoy would overlook the violation of territory, as its object was to catch huguenots. ‘ Return,’ he said to his officer, ‘ and tell those gentlemen to do justice, and that if they do not, there are fourscore in the city who will help me to do it. Add, that they are to act straightforwardly.’ The magistrates remained firm. But the prelate found some little consolation in the cooperation of people better disposed than the syndics of Geneva to subserve his anger.\*

\* Council Registers of 5th July, 1533.

Aimé Levet, instead of escaping by the right bank, on which his house was situated, had chosen the left bank, and thrown himself into that beautiful country which extends between the Rhone and the lake on one side, and Mount Voiron and Mount Salève on the other, and where the wide opening which these two mountains leave between them, permits the traveller to contemplate the magnificent range of the Alps of Mont Blanc. Was it Levet's wish to avoid taking the usual road of the fugitives, on which he was sure to be arrested ; or did he intend hiding in the mountains, as the fine month of July invited him, to climb the easy and graceful slope of the Voiron, or to scale, by the road called l'Echelle (the ladder), the abrupt walls of Salève, whose enormous rocks overhang the plain ? That is possible ; other fugitives had done so. Levet wandered for some time in that part of the valley where the sandy torrent of the Arve utters a low murmur ; but, thinking only how he should escape his persecutors, he had no leisure to contemplate the dazzling vision of the Alps lighted up by a July sun, which made so striking a contrast with the gloomy paths he was then traversing. He knew that mamelukes, priests, ducal partisans, and above all, the Sire de Montagny, castellan of Gaillard, would follow in his track. How strange his destiny ! Only a few months ago he had been a zealous catholic, and then the surprising conversion of his wife had led to his . . . . Now, he was wandering about as a fugitive, without a place where to lay his head. We cannot tell all the anguish he went through, and all the groans he uttered. He did not lose courage, however, for he

knew Him who was his protector, and who maintains the right. He was assured of being able to stand before God and His angels at the very moment when men were hunting him down. He had wolves behind him eager to tear him in pieces, but 'God saves His poor sheep, even out of the jaws of the lions.' \*

They were indeed in pursuit of him. Messire de Charanzonay, a canon of Geneva, had kept his eye on Levet : he knew that he had made off in the direction of the mountains, and that he must be found either in the bailiwick of Gaillard, or in the parish of Bonne. He had an interview, therefore, with the castellan of Gaillard, M. de Montagny, a good catholic and Savoyard, who furnished him with aid ; a band of men left the castle, and the chase began, the canon leading the way. Erelong, poor Levet heard the footsteps of the people in search of him : he was seized. The canon, eager to vent his anger, had him scourged without any form of trial, and after he had been soundly beaten, sent him off to the castle of Gaillard.† Levet, encompassed by guards, was conducted to that fortress, situated at the point where the Arve, issuing from the mountains, enters the plain, and where many an innocent man had been imprisoned. The drawbridge fell and rose again, the massive gates opened, the armed sentinels halted to see the huguenot pass, and at last Levet, doubly guilty, as a liberal and as an evangelical, was thrown into a deep dungeon. From that moment the husband's captivity assured the liberty of the wife.

\* Calvin.

† Council Registers of 5th July and 6th August, 1533.

Other circumstances happening on the same day (6th of July) rejoiced the bishop and his court, and put to the proof the firmness of the council as well as the tranquillity of the citizens. A man sent from the Pays de Vaud reported that a number of well-armed Friburgers had arrived at Nyon and threatened Geneva. They were the avengers of Wernli's blood. 'Go and tell the captain-general,' said the syndics, 'and bid him look to the safety of the city.' Shortly after this, a citizen told the council that the Friburgers who were in Geneva were preparing to set out for the castle of Gaillard. Presently a third person came and informed the syndics that the Friburgers were crossing the lake from Nyon, and that their boats could be clearly distinguished from the upper part of the city, making for the south. Finally, news came from Gaillard that Wernli's relations, accompanied by a great number of Friburg men-at-arms, had entered the fortress, vowing they would wash their feet in the blood of the evangelicals. The council did not know what to do, and the city was filled with apprehension.\*

The extremes of anguish were felt in the homes of the prisoners. The most sinister stories were propagated through the city as to the severity employed by the bishop towards his captives. Some began to lose courage and to ask—it was a question often put in the time of the Reformation—why the disciples of the Gospel had to endure not only the afflictions common to all men, but calamities from which their enemies were exempt? 'Ah!' replied the wiser ones, 'the corn is first threshed in the barn along with the

\* Council Registers of 6th and 7th July.



straw; but afterwards it is pressed and crushed alone on the millstone.\* All were not to be comforted, and from many an afflicted house the cries of sorrow rose to heaven.

Meanwhile, the avoyers of Friburg pressed the council to grant to Wernli's relations the justice they demanded, and insisted that the Genevans arrested on the 23rd May and 4th June should be brought to trial immediately. The mamelukes cried still louder than the Friburgers, and demanded the trial of the eleven persons imprisoned on the 5th July. While the case of the Friburgers was entirely judicial, that of the mamelukes was political: they wished to take advantage of a trial to effect a revolution. The council instructed the procurator-fiscal to have the accused brought before him, as the Genevan constitution required; but the fiscal declared he could not do so on account of the order of the prince, who had cited the case before himself. The bishop meant to be at once judge and interested party, and to substitute clerical despotism for the protecting forms of the lay tribunals. The alarmed magistrates immediately waited on the prince to make their humble but resolute protest.†

Pierre de la Baume had just dined when the syndics appeared. 'I have cited the cause before me,' he said: 'I have my reasons.' The syndics represented to him that he might pardon men after sentence, but not try accused persons, who must necessarily appear before the lawful tribunals. 'I

\* Calvin, *Op. passim*.

† Council Registers of 6th and 7th July, 1533. Roset MS. liv. iii. ch. xiv. Gautier MS.

cite the case before me,' repeated the bishop. The indignant syndics bowed and withdrew. Sebastian de Diesbach, the banneret of Weingarten and other deputies from Berne, had arrived at Geneva, and Baudichon de la Maisonneuve, as it seems, had returned with them. The syndics prayed their intervention, and the Bernese spoke to the bishop; but the passionate headstrong churchman would not listen to them. He stretched the cord at the risk of breaking it. 'I have cited the case before me,' he said again.

The spirit of blind fanaticism was felt in other places besides the palace: it agitated the mamelukes, carried away the episcopalians and even a few of the Friburgers. They had sworn the death of liberty and the Reformation, and were already planning the means of preventing for ever their return to Geneva. They went up and down the city, and were quite indefatigable. As you looked at them you would have said—the comparison was made at the time—that coming after the deluge, and wishing to prevent the waters from invading their dwellings again, they had said to one another: 'Let us build a tower whose top may reach unto heaven.' 'They built the tower of Babel,' says a contemporary, 'presuming, like the giants, to fight against God.'

They did indeed come to blows. On that very day (7th July) some horsemen of the episcopal party who were riding at Plainpalais in front of the convent of their friends the Dominicans, saw three of the most considerable of the Genevese citizens go past: they were Philippe the captain-general, John Lullin afterwards syndic, and Francis Favre who was a member of the ordinary council in the following year. The

cavaliers immediately rode at them, calling them traitors and Lutherans. The three huguenots were hated and feared by the mamelukes, who knew them to be men ready to sacrifice their lives for the ancient liberties of their country. If they had not been included in the first proscription, it was partly through fear, for their boldness was indomitable; and also because it had been preferred to begin with pious evangelicals like Chautemps and Levet. True, Ami Perrin had been arrested; but without having undergone the great change which Scripture calls 'a new birth,' he was still in the front rank whenever the cause of the Reformation was in question. It was he who had actively protected Farel. Besides the episcopal *sbirri* could not well distinguish between protestants who were such inwardly and those who were so outwardly only. However, neither persecution nor insult abated the courage of the citizens. They knew that God often suffers the wicked to act for a few days, and permits them to raise high towers against his elect. Then on a sudden he strikes the huge mass, he loosens the joints and scatters the materials, so that the mighty edifice whose summit was to rise to heaven falls into dust, and is scattered to the winds.

The syndics, being determined to resist the bishop and his usurpations, convened the council of Sixty on the 8th July, and explained to them how he purposed to place Geneva under the government of his good pleasure, and by way of beginning, was preparing to try in his own court the noblest of the citizens. The future that threatened Geneva filled the assembly with emotion and fear. What was to

be done? Resort to force, policy, or diplomacy? The Genevans, in self-defence, looked for simpler and more affecting means; they had recourse to one of those measures which are almost unique in history, and exhale a perfume of antiquity.

There were in Geneva certain Nestors of liberty, who, uplifting their hoary heads among three generations of their children, gave utterance to words of wisdom. To these they had recourse. Councillors—their sons probably—went to fetch them, and these venerable witnesses of the ancient liberties entered the presence of the council, where seats were placed for them. Although the vigour of their bodies was weakened, their hearts now beat stronger for their country than in their younger days, and their memory recalled to them distinctly the times of yore. Accordingly, when they heard of the dangers by which the republic was threatened, and of the bishop's intention to usurp judicial power, they were filled with sadness and alarm. 'Criminal causes,' they said, 'belong to the civil magistrate; the practice has never varied in that respect, and the bishop's claim to hear them himself is a novelty without precedent.' The council of sixty resolved to send a deputation to the prince, composed of the four syndics and six of these aged citizens, who felt happy to bear, before they died, a last testimony to the liberties of their country. If the bishop laughed at the ancient papers of ancient Geneva, would he also laugh at these ancient men?

The deputation, proceeding slowly through the streets, took its way towards the palace. The fathers of the country walked with tottering steps, supported



by the younger ones, and advanced towards the residence of the haughty priest whom Rome had sent to the shores of the Leman, and who was trampling under foot the most venerable rights. Never had men going to plead the independence of a nation inspired more tenderness, sympathy, and respect. People watched and blessed them as they passed, and prayers were raised to heaven that God would accompany with his strength this extraordinary step in favour of liberty.\*

The bishop, informed of the movement, had desired to surround himself with all that could give a specious appearance to his usurpations. And accordingly, when they entered the hall, the deputation found not only the prelate sitting in pomp—not only his councillors, officers, and the ambassadors of Berne and Friburg ranged around him,—but also the relatives of the canon. Pierre de la Baume paired the suppliants of Friburg against the elders of Geneva. The syndics respectfully expressed to him their surprise that he should appear to look upon the council with suspicion, that several citizens of note had been thrown into prison, and lastly that his lordship, contrary to the laws, had cited the case before his own tribunal. But, while the elders turned a look at once mild and penetrating upon the prince, and their hoary heads seemed, as it were, to bring the old times before him, Wernli's relatives, shaking their black garments, again called for vengeance, declaring that the prince had promised to do them justice, and praying upon him to be faithful to his word. 'Yes,' said the bishop immediately, 'yes, I cite the cause before me.' The

\* Council Registers of 8th July, 1533. Gautier MS.

syndics, determined not to give up the most venerated laws of the State, placed before him the ancient constitution of the people, and pointing to the twelfth article, read as follows: 'That no inquisition upon lay malefactors, or other process whatsoever, can or shall be held, except by summoning the four syndics and four citizens of the said city of Geneva, who shall be chosen by the other citizens.\* And that the trial and sentence of the afore-named malefactors belongs and shall belong to the aforesaid citizens, and not to any other persons whatsoever.' The constitution having thus spoken, the syndic ceased.

Then the elders, who had hitherto kept silent, and whose grave, modest, and firm looks inspired respect, came forward. One of them, speaking for all, raised his trembling hands, 'and declared that such had always been the law of Geneva, and that never in the course of their long lives had they had the pain to see the prince trample it under foot.' The feeble voices and calm looks of these venerable men added a strange, and one might almost say a heavenly, force to their testimony. That humble speech in favour of liberty possessed an eloquence more penetrating than the most admirable orations of a Cicero or a Demosthenes. But, if liberty had never been more touching, despotism had never been more obstinate. The syndics conjured the bishop in vain, in the name of the laws and of God, to surrender the prisoners to them, according to the law, so that they might try them conformably with their office; Pierre de la Baume kept repeating: 'I cannot, I have cited the

\* 'Nisi vocatis sindicis et quatuor civibus dictæ civitatis.'—Mémoires d'Archéologie de la Société d'Histoire de Genève, ii. p. 323.

cause before me.' The Friburg ambassadors begged the syndics to consent to the episcopal citation, 'for this time only,' but the magistrates of Geneva were unwilling that the franchises of the city should be violated either now or later. They quitted the bishop's palace with sorrow, and the six elders followed them.\*

When they arrived at the hôtel-de-ville, the council of sixty was still sitting. They gave a faithful account of their mission. They reported that the bishop-prince persisted in his iniquitous *non possumus*, and although the council felt deep pain at hearing the statement, no one flinched. These Genevans knew the fidelity that freemen owe to the institutions of their ancestors. The ambassadors of Berne then asked to be admitted. Importuned by their allies, the Friburgers, and by the councillors of the bishop, these haughty Bernese, unfaithful to their renown, had come to imagine that the Genevans might very well, for *once*, on this solemn occasion, renounce their charter and their rights. Sebastian de Diesbach therefore invited the council to try if they could not 'consent to this citation, which the prelate positively would not recal.' Thus the only allies of Geneva solicited them to enter voluntarily upon the path of concessions. . . . The council deliberated, and the Sixty were unanimous. Here is the resolution which the secretary entered upon the register: 'Ordered to reply to My Lords of Berne, that we will not consent to this citation, as it is entirely contrary to our franchises, and resolved to ask them to be pleased to aid us with their advice.' My Lords of

\* Council Registers of 8th July, 1533. Roset MS. *Chron.* liv. iii. ch. xiv. Gautier MS.

Berne did not like to see their advice rejected, but as they withdrew they said that such men deserved to be free.\*

This new refusal exasperated the mamelukes. They were determined to use Wernli's death as an instrument of war to beat down the ancient edifice of Genevese liberties, to root up the foundations of the Reformation, and to establish on the ruins their own theories concerning the absolute power of the pope and the prince. Consequently they demanded the convocation of the Two Hundred, hoping to find favourable voices among them. The great council met the next day, and the Friburg ambassadors appeared before it, attended by a great number of the relations and friends of the canon—all dejected, gloomy, and silent, like the suppliants of ancient times. It was not fanaticism which animated the greater part of them. They had played with Wernli in their childhood; they had loved him in their youth; they venerated his memory now that a terrible catastrophe had stretched him dead in the streets of the city. If they had been unable to defend him in the hour of danger, they wished to do everything now the hour of vengeance was come. It was not sufficient to have sprinkled his body with their tears, the blood of victims must flow in the very spot where the martyr had been struck down. 'Most honoured lords,' said the canon's brother, 'the justice which men owe to one another is written on earth in the hearts of the just; why, then, should you trample it under foot? You have not yet done justice for the

\* Council Registers of 8th July, 1533. Roset MS. *Chron.* liv. iii. ch. xiv. Gautier MS.



death of him who was our brother and our friend; on the contrary, you left the criminals free to come and go for six weeks. His body lies in the grave, but his blood, sprinkled on the stones of your city, calls for vengeance. If you are armed with the sword, it is not for mere show but to strike malefactors. And yet your tribunals are dumb, and your sword slumbers in the sheath. Permit my lord bishop to cite the case before him. If you refuse, you may rest assured that we shall seek other means of avenging the death of our friend, and we shall drown our sorrow and anger not in the waters of justice but in blood.' The Friburgers spoke as if it were a murder: they forgot that the canon had put on a cuirass, that he had grasped the halberd, that he had gone fully armed to the scene of tumult, that he had rekindled the dying flames, and attacked the huguenots, who had only used their arms in legitimate self-defence. The avoyer of Friburg seconded the eloquent menaces of Wernli's brother.\*

The Two Hundred saw that a war with Friburg and Savoy would be the consequence of their refusal, but they had taken their stand on the rock of right and were not to be moved. 'We do not know of any guilty persons who have been allowed to come and go freely in the city,' they said. 'If it be so, the blame lies with the procurator-fiscal whose duty it was to apprehend them, and not with us who are judges. As for permitting my lord to cite the cause before him, we cannot do so; it would be a violation of the franchises, for which we and our forefathers have

\* Council Registers of 9th July, 1533. Roset MS. *Chron.* liv. iii. ch. xiv. Gautier MS.

often risked our bodies and our goods.' The syndic added that the council would consent to the bishop's naming two persons to be present at the examination, but on condition that they had no deliberative voice. The Friburgers and mamelukes could not make up their minds to accept this proposition. They were specially vexed that Coquet, syndic of the guard, whom they looked upon as devoted to the reform, should be among the number of the judges, whilst in their opinion he ought to be in the prisoner's dock.\*

If it had been a mere question of punishing the author of the canon's death, the prelate would perhaps have trusted to the syndics; but he aimed at destroying both liberty and the Reformation in Geneva, and for that he trusted to himself alone. To supplications, threats, and violence some consented to add reasons. There was a kind of argument used only in scholastic debates to prove that priests were the best judges both in civil and political matters. This strange proposition was demonstrated by syllogism. The major was: 'He is the best fitted to judge who is nearest to God.' The minor this: 'Ecclesiastics are nearer to God than laymen.' The conclusion is evident. They had recourse also to arguments derived from astronomy. 'As there are two great lights in the universe,' it was said, 'so there are also two in society. The Church is the sun and the State is the moon. Now the moon has no light of her own; all her light is derived from the sun. It is evident, therefore, that the church pos-

\* Council Registers of 9th July, 1533. Roset MS. *Chron.* liv. iii. ch. xiv. Gautier MS.

sesses in itself, formally and virtually, the temporal jurisdiction of the state.’\*

Such arguments had great strength in the prelate’s eyes: he appointed two deputies, his bailiff and his attorney, and sent them to the Two Hundred with orders to defend the rights of the sun. The union of the two powers in a single individual supplied them with their principal argument. The BISHOP was hardly mentioned in their speech but only the *prince*. ‘The bishop is your prince,’ they declared; ‘and you, the syndics, are his officers. He may therefore command you as his subjects, and when he transfers to his tribunal a cause which is in your hands, you have only to obey.’ This theory of absolute power could not pass in Geneva. ‘We are not the prince’s officers,’ replied the magistrates, ‘but syndics of the city, elected by the people and not by my lord. He has no power to institute us, and even his own officers, nominated by himself, make oath to us, whilst we make oath to nobody.’ Then the syndics, turning to the Friburg deputation, continued: ‘Sirs, you helped us in the time of Berthelier, help us again now. It is not we, but the bishop and his officers who alone occasion the delay of which you complain. Let two deputies from the bishop, two from Berne, and two from Friburg, assist at the trial, and be witnesses of our uprightness.’†

The bishop persisted in his demand: the deputies from Berne, desiring to terminate the difference, pro-

\* ‘Cum tota claritas lunæ sit a sole, patet quod jurisdictio spiritualis, quæ comparatur soli, habet in se formaliter vel virtualiter jurisdictionem temporalem.’—Goldasti, *Monarchia*, ii. p. 1461 et seq.

† Council Registers of 9th July, 1533.

posed that the cause should be remitted to two judges nominated by the council, two by the bishop, two by Berne, and two by Friburg. The Genevans replied that a people were not at liberty to sacrifice the smallest portion of their rights; and fatigued with these endless importunities, they added: 'If our offer is refused, we will convoke the general assembly of the people and do what it shall ordain.' The Bernese, knowing very well that if the matter was referred to the people no arrangement would be possible, exclaimed: 'Pray do nothing of the kind.'

Whilst even Berne was soliciting the syndics to give way, the wives, relations, and friends of the prisoners conjured them to persevere in their resistance. They feared to hear every morning that it was too late to act. 'It is time to bring the matter to an end,' said the syndics to the Bernese. 'The prisoners are only accused; is it just to make them suffer as if they were guilty? Go and speak plainly to the prince; make him comprehend the duty which our liberties impose upon us.' The Bernese went to the episcopal palace, but neither the bishop nor the Friburgers who were with him would yield an inch. 'Messieurs of Geneva will not do otherwise than they have said,' coldly answered Pierre de la Baume. 'Very good! and we for our part will not do otherwise than we have declared.' The Friburgers added with a menacing tone: 'We are about to return home and there . . . we shall consider another remedy.' This remedy was war: the Friburg deputies would return with an army.\*

While these things were going on, the huguenots

\* Council Registers of 9th July, 1533.



and evangelicals, seized by the bishop's order, were still in prison bound hand and foot. Pierre Vandel, Claude Pasta, the Sire de Compey, Domaine D'Arlod, the energetic Ami Perrin and others, not forgetting Jaquéma, awaited their fate in the gloomy vaults of the episcopal residence. In every house in Geneva and at the townhall people were constantly talking of them. 'The prisoners,' they said, 'are kept in close confinement.' Such severity excited universal compassion, and the secretary of council mentions it in the Registers.\* However if the bishop had been able to deprive them of freedom of motion, there was another he could not take from them, which was a sweet consolation for those who had received the gospel in their hearts. 'Though they were bound and made fast in the stocks,' says Calvin, 'still while praying they praised God.' It is of Paul and Silas, shut up in the prison at Philippi, of whom the reformer is speaking; but what he says of the liberty of prayer, which exists even in spite of chains, may be applied to some of those who were now in the prelate's dungeons.

Just at this time a report circulated through the city that the bishop was secretly preparing boats for the removal of the prisoners to some castle. It was said that certain stout watermen were ready to grasp the oar, that an armed force would accompany the captives, and that as soon the episcopal officers were upon the open lake they would laugh at the syndics and the huguenots. These reports still more excited the anger of the citizens. One of them, a daring man named Pierre Verne, watching the boats moored

\* Council Registers of 12th July, 1533.

on the shore, sought the means of preventing this unlawful abduction: he thought he had found one, simple and in his opinion infallible, and waited (as we shall see presently) until the veil of night concealed him from the eyes of the enemy.\*

If the prince's councillors were contriving how to get the huguenot captives away, certain of the mamelukes were vexed that there were still so many at liberty, and that the bishop was so slow in apprehending them all without exception. It seemed to them that the *coup d'état*, or rather *coup de main*, of which they had dreamt was long in coming; and they knew that if a bold stroke is to succeed, the execution must be prompt. Some of them began therefore to make amends for official slowness by separate acts of violence.

It was harvest time, and Jean Ami Curtet or Curteti, a man well disposed towards the Gospel and belonging to a family which Duke Philibert le Beau had ennobled, had gone out in the morning to visit a field which he possessed on the banks of the Arve. He examined the ears and the stalks: everything promised a fine harvest. Knowing that when wheat is once ripe, there should be no delay in reaping it, he ordered the labourer who accompanied him to begin to cut it. But he was destined to fall before his corn, and on that very spot. . . . A sudden noise was heard, some men in disguise fell upon him, knocked him down, beat him and left him for dead in his own field. The news soon reached the city. 'It is some gentlemen in disguise who have murdered him,' said the people. On hearing the mournful news, the

\* Council Registers of 12th July, 1533.

relations and friends of Curtet seized their arquebuses, and about forty of them hastened towards the Arve bridge. They raised the poor man who was seriously wounded, and bearing their sad burden returned slowly into the city, their hearts bursting with anger. As the procession passed in front of a house where some Friburgers lodged, one of the Genevans called them 'Rascals and traitors!' The Friburgers, innocent of the attempt, swore that they would demand satisfaction for such an outrage; but the sad procession, passing slowly through the principal streets of Geneva, under the windows of the chief citizens, called up very different thoughts. Men asked each other whether the partisans of the prince-bishop intended to add murder to illegal arrest; whether it was sufficient to wear a mask and strange garments to deprive citizens of their lives, without any risk to the murderers; and whether every huguenot, as he was engaging in the most innocent occupations, might be suddenly laid dead by a masked enemy in the fields bequeathed to him by his ancestors ? \*

While these dangers were accumulating on the heads of the friends of the Reformation in Geneva itself, perils not less great were gathering round the city. People arriving from the country on the left bank of the Rhone and of the lake reported that armed Friburgers and Savoyards were assembling in great numbers at the castle of Gaillard, and that one of the Wernlis commanded a part of them. It was well known that this person, exasperated by the death of his relative the canon, combined in his heart, along with the love and respect he bore to his memory, a

\* Council Registers of 14th July, 1533.

more energetic sentiment—that of revenge. The knights and soldiers who gathered round him caught the infection of his anger. But not at Gaillard only were armed men assembling, according to the reports of the country people: there were some higher up, in the direction of the mountains, at Etrembières, where there was a ferry over the Arve to the *mandement* of Mornex. Others were assembling higher still around the picturesque hill of Montoux, and especially at the village of Collonges, at the foot of the hill. At the same time, the people who came to Geneva from the right bank of the Rhone and the lake, from the side of the Jura, brought similar tidings, and spoke of armed men in the Gex district, and particularly at the Grand Saconnex, three-quarters of a league from Geneva. The city was beginning to be surrounded by its enemies.\*

The time seemed near when the projects conceived by the bishop at Arbois were about to be realised. That prelate, who reproached his friend Besançon Hugues for not having ‘*barked*’ loud enough to prevent the fall of his authority, proposed not only to bark himself against the ‘*wolves*,’ but also to bite them. One of those priests whom Rome had raised to the rank of princes of nations had said: ‘I am accustomed to act vigorously . . . I shall consider what it must be.’ The pontiff was preparing to fulfil his own prophecies.

The future of Geneva was indeed threatening. On the 10th of July a gloomy veil seemed to be closing over that noble city. A fanatical party was preparing the shroud in which it designed to bury

\* Council Registers of 10th July, 1533.



the independence of the citizens and the Reformation of the Church. That city, for which many persons had already anticipated a more glorious destiny, was about to be reduced to a mere provincial town, occupying an undistinguished place in the world, and subject to the enervating influence of Rome, without life and without liberty.

But other things were written in heaven. God was preparing both Geneva and Calvin to deliver battle together, on the result of which was to depend the triumph of the Gospel and the liberty of modern nations. And to prepare for these glorious events, the steps of the great reformer were soon to be directed, undesignedly on his part, towards that small but energetic city, unique of its kind in Europe, and of which the man of God was not then thinking.

We shall not forget that other nations have also added their stone to the edifice of civil and religious liberty. From Switzerland, Germany, the Low Countries, the British Isles, France, and afterwards America, as well as other countries, were to proceed some of the acts destined to secure the triumph of God's right and man's liberties.

And yet Calvin and Geneva did something. Calvin possessed an inflexible resolution. God had said to this man as he had said of old to one of his prophets: *As an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead; fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house.\** It was not by chance, as it is termed, that such a character was called to the midst of a people who had shown in terrible struggles, watered with the blood of their

\* Ezekiel, iii. 9.

best citizens, an indomitable resistance to absolute power. At the period of history we are describing God was preparing Calvin and Geneva each apart ; but the union of those two natures, predestined (if I may say so) for each other, could not fail to produce remarkable effects in the world. The reformer was about to concentrate in this little corner of earth a moral force which would contribute to save the Reformation in Europe, and to preserve in a few more favoured spots those precious liberties to which all nations have equal rights.

It was necessary in the 16th century that a great man and a little people should serve as a centre to the Reformation. The firmness of the one, the energy of the other, tempered like steel in the waters of the Gospel, were to give the tone to nations that were greater though possibly less decided, and to impress the seal of unity on other energies. *Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth !*

While waiting for this new dawn, sorrow reigned in Geneva. The reformers were expelled, their most fervent disciples were in prison, or wandering through the country ; and the sword was suspended over the heads of all the friends of God's word. The mamelukes triumphed. The friends of the Gospel and of liberty asked with anguish if the day of great tribulation was come at last . . . . The wives of the prisoners and of the fugitives expected to hear every moment of some new tragedy. Children called for their fathers, who came not to the call. Groans and lamentations, apprehension and even cries of anger, prevailed everywhere.

Only a few souls, putting their trust in God, pre-

served some little hope. Knowing that 'God is not God unless He is on a throne, that is, unless he governs the world, they feared nothing, however terrible it might be,'\* from the hands of the powers of the earth. In the midst of agitated hearts and dejected faces, there were eyes which, though dimmed with tears, were raised towards heaven with a glance of hope and faith.

\* Calvin.

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

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